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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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EDITORS, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1935

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An Ancient Theory of Evolution

THE conception of evolution is of dateless antiquity. It is implicit in all the great religions, for every real exponent of spiritual truth has based his teaching upon the immediate experience of his own evolution from an elemental into a real manhood. Moreover, this transmutation of human consciousness, the birth of the Immortal from the chrysalis of the mortal, was not interpreted as an isolated supernatural event. According to the mystical traditions which descended from India, Chaldæa and Egypt, the Universe, both as a whole and in every part, is in continuous process of transmutation, as if the hidden life of Nature were endowed with an alchemical potency which everywhere and always separates the subtile from the gross.

It would be possible to multiply quotations in illustration of the theme,—from the Indian *Purânas* and the liturgies of Egypt, from the fragments of the earliest known systems of Greek thought, from the Book of Genesis itself. One of the noblest expressions of this ancient theory of evolution is found in a poem of Jalál Ud-din Rúmi, the Sufî mystic of the thirteenth century:

> I died from mineral and plant became;
> Died from the plant, and took a sentient frame;
> Died from the beast, and donned a human dress;
> When by my dying did I e'er grow less?
> Another time from manhood I must die
> To soar with angel pinions through the sky,
> Midst Angels also I must lose my place,
> Since everything shall perish save His Face.
> Let me be naught! The harp-strings tell me plain
> That unto Him do we return again.

Darwinism

The modern evolutionist would scarcely recognize Jalál Ud-din Rúmi as a precursor. In the first place, it is most unlikely that he would have the faintest

notion as to the meaning which the Sufî intended to convey. The modern hypothesis of evolution is not concerned with the doctrine that the kingdoms of Nature signify states of consciousness through which the Spirit, or Monad, must pass on its way to perfect knowledge of Itself. What was the problem which inspired the remarkable line of scientists who first formulated this theory,—Buffon, Lamarck, Lyell, Wallace, Huxley, above all, Charles Darwin? It was not the mystery of consciousness, but the nature and origin of biological species.

The range of their interests may seem narrow, but their actual achievements were of the greatest importance. By the study of geological strata and of the physical basis of heredity, they and their successors have provided objective tangible proof that living forms have undergone countless transformations during the æons which have elapsed since the earliest fossils were integrated in rock. Few will deny Darwin's deduction that the succession of organisms represents as a whole a progress from inferior to superior types, this progress being determined in the last analysis by "natural selection", by the "survival of the fittest" in the "struggle for existence". As has been pointed out, Darwin's years of meditation terminated in an intuition of a profound and all-embracing spiritual truth, even though he may have failed to surmise its universal implications. Men may prefer to forget the fact, but it is true, above as below, that advancement and growth are the fruit of incessant struggle and effort, of an eternal warfare against blindness and inertia. Life, all life, is a battle-field.

Emergent Evolution and Orthogenesis

The weakness of Darwin's hypothesis was that he failed to admit any purpose or direction within the evolutionary process. He assumed too readily that everything could be explained by physical causes, by the operation of mechanical laws. It is self-evident, he argued, that no two creatures of any species are exactly alike; that there are always variations, however minute, and Nature relentlessly selects those which are best adapted for survival. Darwin and, until quite recently, his followers, imagined that variations are produced in the most haphazard and accidental fashion, generally as a result of the permutations and combinations of the qualities or "characters" which are transmitted to every organism by its parents.

This naïve view can no longer be maintained. The influence of heredity in determining many variations is unquestioned, as Mendel showed; but heredity does not explain the discontinuous variations, known as mutations or saltations, which are manifested by the sudden appearance of new characters in an organism, that is, of qualities which are unlike any of those possessed by its ancestors. It is as if certain potentialities, hitherto hidden beneath the surface of life, abruptly *emerged* into visibility, and the attested fact that such mutations occur with some frequency has provided a basis for the so-called theory of "emergent evolution". Many biologists now believe that discontinuous variations have been more effective as a cause of the origin of species than the slight continuous variations which Darwin regarded as sufficient. Experiments in the breeding of fruit-flies suggest the possibility that some mutations, at least, can be induced

by subjecting these creatures to the action of rays of various kinds and intensities. The fact is significant, though some of the methods which biologists habitually adopt in their investigation of animal processes, are coarse and brutal, when they are not vicious and sinister. Even fruit-flies presumably have "natural rights", and Nature may yet take some revenge upon man for tampering with them, merely to satisfy his curiosity.

However, it has been established that the course of animate Nature is marked by the appearance, from time to time, of forms which inaugurate new types distinct not only in degree but also in kind from all that have preceded them. What is even more remarkable, species seem to have a definite period of growth, like individuals. There is a tendency, as most biologists now admit, for variations of any given character to follow, through successive generations, a determined line. Natural selection sets limits to the extension of this line, but it cannot of itself initiate anything. The primal impulse seems to be given by the emergence of a new quality which continues to expand during thousands or millions of years until it terminates—as it were—in a completely exfoliated character, the "form" of which is seen to have been present from the beginning, as the form of a plant is potentially present from the moment of the construction of the seed. It is only by such a supposition that the rich beauty of living Nature can be justified to the reason. If there were nothing but chance variation and natural selection, the only values in the world would be utilitarian, in the narrowest sense. We know that this is not so, for the earth contains nightingales as well as sparrows, and gazelles as well as pigs. To this tendency of organisms to evolve in a given direction towards a definite goal, biologists have given the name "orthogenesis", which means "to be born straight", a vivid phrase, for it suggests that to be really born, one must be born under the dominion of a permanent guiding principle.

The Exfoliation of Principles

It is a commentary upon the bankruptcy of the so-called scientific imagination, that the logical and inevitable consequence of orthogenesis is not perceived. The biologist persists in the attempt to interpret in materialistic and mechanistic terms, vital phenomena which cannot be adequately conceived apart from the idea of purpose.

Indeed, the student of Theosophy finds in the facts underlying the theories of emergent evolution and orthogenesis, a confirmation of certain propositions set forth in *The Secret Doctrine*. In many ways, these recall the ancient conception, celebrated in the Sufî verses, of the pilgrimage of the Monad through the natural kingdoms. It is suggested that an ascending series of forms in the material world represents the gradual exfoliation of archetypes, of astral, psychic, spiritual and divine principles. The Stoics aptly named these principles *logoi spermatikoi*, the "ideas which generate", or, as defined by Marcus Aurelius, "the germs of future existences, endowed with the power to produce change, a succession of appearances and the realization of their essence." The ultimate cause of a mutation or discontinuous variation, according to such a hypothesis, would be

the descent of a previously discarnate "idea" or "entity" from the invisible into the visible world; and orthogenesis would be the forward movement whereby the "entity" becomes gradually embodied. In the terminology of *The Secret Doctrine*, this creative "entity" is, in its inmost essence, a "Divine Flame", a ray of Creative Consciousness, a mode of the One Life which forms and transforms all the manifestations of Nature. In another sense, it may be represented as the Monad passing through some particular phase of its progress towards Self-consciousness. It is said that the human organism is built up by the convergent activities of myriads of such "entities", and that the transition from the animal to the man is produced by the "fall into matter" of the "entity" or principle which we vaguely name the Soul or Ego. In one aspect, every embodiment of the Spirit is something new, individual, unique; in another aspect, it appears to be a recapitulation or repetition of that which has already existed, as the child is a copy of its parents. Thus we read that the men, that is, the real human principles, of this earth are emanations or children of beings who attained and perfected their humanity in other world-cycles upon other globes.

> The Occult Doctrine teaches that while the Monad is cycling on downward into matter, [the] Elohim, or Pitris—the lower Dhyân Chohans—are evolving, *pari passu* with it, on a higher and more spiritual plane, descending also relatively into matter on their own plane of consciousness, when, after having reached a certain point, they will meet the incarnating senseless Monad, encased in the lowest matter, and blending the two potencies, Spirit and Matter, the union will produce that terrestrial symbol of the "Heavenly Man" in space—PERFECT MAN. . . . Spirit and Matter, though one and the same thing in their origin, when once they are on the plane of differentiation, begin each of them their evolutionary progress in contrary directions—Spirit falling gradually into Matter, and the latter ascending to its original condition, that of a pure spiritual Substance. . . . Therefore, when the hour strikes . . . for the formation of the Perfect Man—rudimentary man of the first two and a half Races being only the *first*, gradually evolving into the *most perfect of mammals*—the Celestial Ancestors (Entities from preceding Worlds, called in India the Shishta) step in on this our plane, and incarnate in the physical or animal man, as the Pitris had stepped in before them for the formation of the latter. . . . Fire alone is ONE, on the plane of the One Reality: on that of manifested, hence illusive, Being, its particles are fiery Lives. . . . Every visible thing in this Universe was built by such LIVES, from conscious and divine primordial man down to the unconscious agents that construct matter (*The Secret Doctrine*, ed. 1893, I, 267-269).

The Disembodiment of a Principle

One is justified in holding fast to the conclusion that everything in Nature, without any exception, exists by virtue of and for the sake of a principle. This principle, in the language of the Platonists, is an Idea in the Divine Mind, and is, therefore, rooted in the Eternal, as indestructible as the Essence of Nature. But its successive embodiments are necessarily always changing, subject to the universal cyclic law which prescribes that every act of creation, every evolution or exfoliation, must be followed by an act of assimilation, by an involution or indrawal,—as every "day", of whatever duration, must fade into a "night".

Observation and experience, however, oblige one to admit that the course of evolution does not always run smoothly. There are creatures in human shape,

for instance, whose existence may be best interpreted, not as a progressive embodiment but as a progressive *disembodiment* of a principle. The "Celestial Ancestors", by and for whom the human kingdom exists, may be forced to withdraw from "physical or animal man" who persistently perverts the gift of a more subtile consciousness. But the rejection of its indwelling principle by any creature can only result in its disintegration, dissolution and final death. The essential being of the principle is not affected, but it is no longer represented, even partially, by any form on this plane.

In an age like the present, when civilization trembles in the balance, one would expect to find many tragic instances of the disembodiment of the human principle. Such a tendency to disintegration is, of course, aided and abetted by all the dark powers, incarnate and disincarnate. However, the worst danger to civilization would seem to come from good and kind people whose amiable intentions co-exist with a moral materialism no less devastating because it may be unconscious.

For example, not long ago, the Dean of a prominent American women's college was quoted as saying that the technique of training character has become incoherent and confused, "because old principles and standards seem to have failed". One may give her the benefit of the doubt and assume that she was using words loosely. The point is that no real principle or standard can ever conceivably "fail", for it is as immutable as any of the real laws of Nature. What can easily happen, is that we fail to recognize it as a principle, and therefore, of course, fail to put it into practice.

Modernistic educators habitually confuse principles with customs or with forms of etiquette. Customs and etiquette change constantly, for better or for worse. The clothes and table-manners of one generation are seldom those of the next. But these things only possess significance in the measure that they serve as vehicles for the expression of those qualities of heart and mind which distinguish the *human* part of our nature from the animal. Courtesy, for instance, is not a specific mode of manners which has no place in the busy modern world; it is an attribute inseparable from the human being which each of us is enjoined by spiritual and natural law to become. Loyalty, honour, fidelity to a pledged word, are no less real and necessary in a machine age than in an age of chivalry. They constitute the true man, the soul which is seeking embodiment, and if orthogenesis is to continue in the human species, these human attributes must continue to exfoliate until they become dominant and irresistible factors in the determination of conduct.

Abundant Life

In the Horace Mann School, New York, the theme around which the work of certain junior high school grades is organized is "The Progress of Man Through the Ages". The aim, as the Principal has expressed it, "is to orientate the students in the present-day world and to give them some conception of 'how we got this way'." Horace Mann School is closely identified with Teachers College, Columbia University, and, in at least one of its departments, is used as a "demon-

stration school" for the edification of students of the College. It is probable, therefore, that the opinions of Professors in the College determine the meaning given to the term, "progress", in the School. We quote the following from an address at the Conference on Educational Activities of the Jewish Centre, by a member of the faculty of Teachers College, Dr. F. Ernest Johnson:

> Our religious and ethical groups and societies can contribute an invaluable aid to social change by steadfastly maintaining the ideal of an abundant life for every member of the human family and by relentlessly exposing the conditions in contemporary society which make its realization impossible.

He added that progress, presumably in the direction of "abundant life", has become so rapid, that a doctor of philosophy from any leading university "can become a hopeless dodo in fifteen or twenty years . . . . not only educationally but morally". One might ask what is the use of becoming a doctor of philosophy at all, when the risk of extinction is so high. However, what immediately concerns us is to discover what is this "abundant life", which, according to so many optimistic intellectuals, is "just around the corner".

"I am come", said the Master Christ, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." It is impossible to doubt that he was referring to spiritual life which he had the power to bestow upon those who asked with their whole hearts for the gift. In other words, a Master can aid his disciples to increase and strengthen their higher natures, to embody the principle which can alone make them veritable human beings.

It is painfully apparent that this is not the sense in which the intelligentsia interpret the term. For them it means an abundance of the things of this world, a multiplication of gratifications for the physical, personal man, a redistribution of material goods, so that everybody, good or bad or indifferent, may be assured a satisfactory minimum of comfort and amusement. The confusion or naïveté of their minds is such that they cannot even imagine the existence of any disturbing factor in the society which had realized such an "ideal". In brief, they share the delusion common to materialists of all degrees, that the sins and evils, to which mankind is heir—greed, envy, malice, cruelty, treachery, bad faith, and so on—would disappear, if everyone could be given abundantly the material goods which he desires. One wonders by what logic they can justify their imputation of heartless selfishness to the "propertied interests", for according to their theory, a man's wealth should be the measure of his virtue.

It is as certain as anything can be that Nature would never allow such a "dream-society" to become an actuality, for, in the very process of becoming, it would be rent to pieces by the inordinate stimulation of those evils which the dreamers pretend they can so easily cure. As the Indian scripture says, desire grows by feeding on itself; and it is sheer delusion to believe that the physical personality can ever satisfy its appetites or try to satisfy them without friction and conflict with other personalities. Even a little meditation upon the laws of evolution, upon orthogenesis, should convince us that an abundant material life, divorced from any spiritual preoccupation, is rendered impossible by Nature,

because it would be a denial of the rights of the incarnating soul, to which the demands of material life must be subjected. A soulless life in a human body implies the disembodiment of the principle which alone can keep any form of life in the body.

As all the sages have taught from the beginning of history, there is only one permanent cure for personal misery which, incidentally, is not limited to poverty. The ultimate goal of every human life is to become self-conscious upon the plane of the real man, the soul. When purely *personal* suffering is no longer needed to keep men from falling utterly asleep, from losing all sense of their spiritual destiny, its original *raison d'être* disappears; but men will then be so interested in more important matters that they may really care little whether it disappears or not. Those who teach the contrary—that unhappiness of every kind can be healed by material readjustments—are evil shepherds of the people, nor is the perversity of their mission diminished because they may be convinced of their own goodness and of the badness of those who disagree with them.

Very few understand that suffering, in some form or other, is inseparable from manifested existence. We are free, however, to choose why we suffer, whether it be for ourselves or for others. The Masters have testified that the growth of unselfish love liberates the heart from gross personal pain but also initiates it into a higher form of pain, the anguish of compassion, the noble sorrow which is the accompaniment of the soul's ever-renewed need to give itself utterly to the object of its love.

An Experiment in Cynicism

Professors are often tempted to take themselves and their studies much too seriously. This is notoriously true of the reformers, but it also explains the psychic symptoms of certain savants who are renowned for their sobriety and self-restraint. A recent book, *Adult Interests*, by another representative of Teachers College, Dr. Edward L. Thorndike, illustrates the hallucinations from which anyone might suffer, if he spent his life collecting outlandish data to prove grotesque hypotheses.

Dr. Thorndike was apparently convinced, before he began his work, that at least one old saying is almost universally true: that every man has his price. He organized a campaign of research and succeeded without any apparent difficulty in establishing to his own satisfaction that he was right. His method was to ask various people what reward would induce them to perform some debasing or silly action. It was an experiment in cynicism and undoubtedly proved the cynicism of the professor. One ventures to suspect that it also proved his gullibility; for it is almost impossible to believe that the men and women who took the tests were as serious as they might have been.

A few examples may be mentioned. The women, on the average, claimed that they would abandon all hope of life after death for $10, whereas the men demanded $1,000. Half of the young Americans of both sexes said that they would spit on a portrait of George Washington for $10. The average man contracted to choke a stray cat for $2,500. The average woman agreed to practise

cannibalism for $1,375,000. The average older woman would be willing to spend eight days in jail, if the compensation were a ride on a camel.

One may make a liberal allowance for the alleged sense of humour of the "average older woman" and her associates. Nevertheless, the impression which remains is not unlike that left by a nightmare. It is not encouraging to find that after millions of years of evolution, a number of students in the largest University in the world find it amusing to compete in the display of vices and imbecilities which they have for sale. It proves what so few are ready to believe, namely, that the animal personality of man, without any guidance from above, easily assumes the form of an idiot or a monster, possessing enough perverted "reason" to make itself lower than any of the brutes which in its various moods it resembles. It is this personality, let us remember, that is to be given an "abundant life", according to the plans of Dr. Thorndike's colleague.

However, the most distressing feature of the whole affair is its manifestation of unadulterated cynicism. Dr. Thorndike contemplates a pig-sty, and regards it as an almost perfect symbol of human nature. There is no evidence that he admits even the possible existence of any fundamental quality of consciousness which is not essentially base and mean. In other words, refusing to take seriously the reality, potential or actual, of the soul, he insults the dignity of real manhood. Let us hope that there are some teachers of youth in the colleges, who have the courage and insight to affirm that there have been and are human beings who cannot be bought at any price; that all human nature is not "lower nature".

Psychiatric Fatalism

Dr. Thorndike and Dr. Johnson may be said to enunciate two versions of the same idea. The former suggests that men can be bribed to become bad; the latter, that they can be bribed to become good. It is doubtful whether many men of science would agree with either point of view. As far as one can judge, the general scientific attitude towards the personality is fatalistic. At least, many psychiatrists seem to be convinced that men are what they are because they could not possibly have become anything else, given their heredities and environments. Under such circumstances, they would doubtless argue, not even bribery could make anyone better or worse than he is. Few of them even raise the question of the effectiveness of aspiration and moral effort as transforming agencies.

We quote from the *New York Times* of April 30, 1935, the report of an address by Dr. Walter Freeman, neuropsychiatrist, of St. Elizabeth Hospital, Washington, D. C., before the American College of Physicians:

> Human personality, Dr. Freeman told the physicians, has its roots in heredity and is determined by the genes carried by the chromosomes in each cell and transmitted through the germ plasm from generation to generation. Specifying four fundamental personality reaction types as cycloid, paranoid, schizoid, and epileptoid, he continued:
>
> "Two important functions, as far as the personality is concerned, may safely be granted to the endocrine system. These are emotional stability and energy drive. . . . Nevertheless, as far as determining whether an individual shall be a proud, sensitive, suspicious,

paranoid individual; or a timid, shut-in, dreamy, schizoid person; a boisterous, jolly, hail-fellow-well-met cycloid; or a moody, pedantic, egocentric epileptoid individual, the endocrine glands would seem to have little to say in the matter."

From his studies of pituitary glands in 1400 cases, Dr. Freeman said it might be inferred that the pituitary "supplies the energy drive that enables the personality to unfold", but he added: "There is little evidence that it determines the personality, since the great groups of schizoid and paranoid personalities are almost perfectly balanced."

Thus, according to Dr. Freeman, the personality which anyone may have is received, like his body, from his parents. Its growth may be quickened or retarded by the action of hormones or "chemical messengers", but otherwise it cannot be modified from the moment of birth. Whether one be paranoid or schizoid or half-paranoid and half-schizoid, such one must remain. Dr. Freeman is not as cynical in tone as Dr. Thorndike; but the assemblage of qualities which he divides among the various "reaction types" would be depressing—if true. One cannot discover, on the basis of his classification, how or why any human being could be capable of a decent or heroic action.

It may be admitted that a fatalistic or pessimistic view is relatively true as regards the "average man" in his average moments. The "average man" tends to identify himself with one or another "congeries of elementals", first of all, with the image of his body in his mind, then, with his habits, associations, dreams, hopes and fears, and so on. In a certain sense, it might be said that his actions and reactions are determined by the particular type of lower nature with which he was born; that his idiosyncracies are almost as calculable, in their fixed repetition, as the revolutions of a machine.

But, as Theosophy teaches, the soul, the essence of man, is not the personality which the "average man" persistently thinks of as his "self". The soul transcends all such distinctions as cycloid and epileptoid, inasmuch as it is not a by-product of molecular combinations, but is an informing principle, an entity of a higher order in process of embodiment, analogous, as it seems, to the vital principles whose apparent "emergence" in the organic world is a primary factor in the formation of new species. The soul in complete self-conscious incarnation, in the life of a Master, for instance, is intensely individual, as the biographies of the Buddha and the Christ testify, but also its powers and attributes are universal, innumerable, and ever-expanding. Even in the world there have been those whose soul-consciousness was developed to the point where it is possible to be both outwardly alert and introspective, to maintain without confusion a balance between the powers of thought and the powers of action.

Paul Valéry has suggested that the true man of genius is perpetually enlarging the orbit of his interests; that, in his perfect form, he is the "universal man". He quotes a phrase of Leonardo da Vinci:—The great man presides over all his states of consciousness with "obstinate rigour"—*ostinato rigore.*

Physical and Reflective Consciousness

Most of the educators and scientists of to-day have one point in common. They recognize only one aspect of evolution, the physical or physiological,

which begins, as they imagine, with some hypothetical protoplasmic globule and ascends, through a long chain of organisms, to the human species. At some stage of this journey, consciousness is said to appear, how or why nobody can imagine. According to the school represented by Dr. Freeman, in the higher animals, including man, consciousness is linked, in some mysterious sense, with the genes, the ultimate organic units within the nucleus of the cell which have been postulated to account for the way in which physical properties are segregated and are transmitted from parents to offspring. Thus, Dr. Freeman speaks of the personality as "determined by the genes".

Theosophy naturally accepts the fact that there is a physical heredity for every body born upon earth, just as it accepts the general hypothesis that there is an evolution of physical substance and form from the mineral to the human kingdom. But physical heredity is not sufficient to explain the phenomena of mutation and orthogenesis. Much less can it explain the transformations of consciousness. The nature and origin of consciousness as a thing in itself is an absolute mystery which no prudent philosopher ever pretends to solve. It is the theosophical teaching that wherever there is matter there is consciousness, for these two are inseparable, being two aspects of one fundamental Reality. But there are innumerable states or phases, both of matter and of consciousness. With two of these states of consciousness we are all familiar. There is the objective physical consciousness, which pertains to the functions of our bodies and which we share with all the creatures of the lower kingdoms; and there is the subjective reflective consciousness which pertains to our mental and emotional natures. Anyone can discover for himself how much of his consciousness is of this reflective kind, by measuring the time which he spends each day, dreaming, imagining, remembering, anticipating. All these operations are reflective, for they are not concerned with actual physical things but with the images of those things *reflected* in the mind, or, more rarely, with the images of ideals mirrored from higher planes. It may be suggested that these psychic functions are not altogether peculiar to man, for they are at least foreshadowed in the lives of the higher animals; but it is only in man, so far as one can judge, that they become dominant factors in the determination of behaviour.

The human personality, the psychic man, may be described as a bundle of mind-images. The psychic man depends upon a physical body as its vehicle of expression on the physical plane. His desires and fears prompt the physical man to act, and the inherited constitution of the physical man, in turn, reacts upon the psychic man, stimulating certain proclivities and inhibiting others. But the psychic man, Theosophy affirms, is not himself a product of physical heredity. The "seeds" or *skandhas*, from which he grows, enter the particular physical body which provides the conditions of material existence best adapted to the Karma, to the sequence of cause and effect, set in motion by actions in previous lives, of which those *skandhas* are the fruit. Skandhas "are being made from day to day under the law that every thought combines instantly with one of the elemental forces of nature, becoming to that extent an entity which will endure in accordance with the strength of the thought as it leaves the brain, and all of these

are inseparably connected with the being who evolved them" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 102).

The Higher and Lower Minds in Man

As the quotation from *The Secret Doctrine* suggests, there is a two-fold creation of man. "The first Adam was made a living soul (*psuche*); the last Adam was made a quickening spirit (*pneuma*)." The individuality, the spiritual soul or "higher mind", cannot be embodied, until a personal nature, a "lower mind", has evolved to the point where it can reflect the image of the "higher mind" and can begin to serve as its vehicle, just as the physical nature must reach a certain degree of development before it can become the vehicle of a personality. Thus the incarnation of the "Pitris" is said to precede that of the "Celestial Ancestors". These two incarnations, taken together, may be said to be the cause and basis of the great mutation which was the beginning of the real history of man on this planet. Everyone who conceives of himself as human, should be actively labouring to complete that mutation, by purifying his personal nature and also by insisting that his true Self is not the personal nature but is the spiritual soul, a ray of divine consciousness transmitted to him by the Master, the Father in Heaven.

The creative process has continued with varying fortunes for æons. Universal tradition testifies that some individuals have become "perfected men"; but as regards the multitude, the "physical or animal man" has undergone a deformation which makes impossible the reflection of an image from above without greater or lesser distortion. The psychic man has stolen divine powers which belong by right to the soul, and has used them to build the illusion that he, and not the soul, is the self. There is tragic truth in the Pythagorean maxim that the soul in the body is like a man in a tomb. Nevertheless, as Madame Blavatsky remarked: "That body, so desecrated by materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all the mysteries of nature in our solar universe." It is within the power of every man to accomplish the transformation of the soul's vesture from a tomb into a temple. Our present personalities are now sowing the seeds which must grow into the experiences of future existences. We can so live now that when this reconstitution of elements occurs, a soul can incarnate with them, using them as the substance with which it can clothe itself. The least that we can do is to begin, wherever we are, to think and to act in accordance with the principles of real human behaviour, established by the experience of ages.

FRAGMENTS

I THOUGHT I had a vision in the night:

He stood in the first faint grey of dawning; the sun rose in the west that day, so pure a light shone from Him.

Behind Him angels trailed, like drifting clouds,—you saw them through the branches of the trees where His light caught them.

His blood-marked brow was crowned with roses, not with thorns. His voice came: "I gathered them in your garden for their fragrance", were His words; "Saint Catherine made the chaplet."

In His hand there was a stalk of stately lilies, not the mocking reed. "These too, I gathered", He said, "and shall for ever hold."

This last I heard upon my knees.

The passion and the anguish in His eyes seemed somewhat softened, as if there were a momentary sense of rest, a momentary easement of a burden, with a half-stifled sigh.

Faint and sick with shame and adoration, I lay upon my face,—I who had even found a toil that which brought such a benediction. What guerdon for my grudging sacrifice!

I thought I had a vision in the night, but when the morning came and sunshine lay about, an opalescent glimmer still remained where He had stood; there was a special movement in the leaves, and now and then the light touched for an instant on an angel's wing,—or seemed to do so, who can say?

All day, all day this lasted.

I found the cut stalk where the lilies grew,—the bush with its missing roses.

Who knows where earth begins and heaven ends; who can fix the boundary of that inner world and this, determine what is seen and what unseen?

Why grant a boundary between ourselves and heaven? What boundary can there be, save sin?

Living in heavenly-mindedness, we shall make earth one with heaven, remove the veil, nor know which pavement, whether clay or gold, we tread.

Thou who didst deign to bless those roses by their wearing; Thou who didst bless those lilies by their holding, and in their blessing didst bless us: keep our eyes open to behold the Real; give us the faith that parts the clouds about us, and through the opening sees the Everlasting Glory.

CAVÉ.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE lesson of the Convention? There were many lessons, as I see it", the Philosopher replied; "first and foremost, that we must strive ceaselessly, each one of us, to improve our standard of values. By this I mean we must strive, in our lives as well as in our natures, to sift the true from the false, the eternal from the transitory, the things of everlasting value from those that, in the light of eternity, are worthless. More than that, we must not rest content with past analysis or effort; we must continually 'improve our product', as the manufacturer is fond of saying; we must discriminate between finer and finer shades of value; we must bring before the bar of our own conscience the manner of our thought about things, about persons, events, habits. Even if we avoid wrong-doing, are we countenancing it in others, and thus encouraging it in the world around us, either from our failure to see things as they are, or from moral cowardice,—from fear of incurring displeasure? To be tolerant may be a virtue; but it often becomes a vice. Kipling once warned the Rhodes scholars, at Oxford, against 'the middle-aged failings of toleration, impartiality, or broad-mindedness'.

"People do not always realize that if we countenance wrong-doing in others, we become a party to it: we cannot hold ourselves innocent. This is part of the meaning of Brotherhood. All the saints have felt the sins of others as their own sins; the Masters bear the sins of the world: it is this, of course, that makes vicarious atonement possible.

"Take, for example, the question of divorce: what is the attitude of members of the T.S. on that subject? Are we indifferent to the immorality of the present worldly code?

"Marriage is either a sacrament or a sacrilege and worse. If a sacrament, it is as close a union as ought to exist between the soul and God, between the personality and the soul. 'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder'. So, when two people marry, they stand as in the presence of God and take one another 'for better for worse'. Any kind of marriage ceremony is a most solemn promise, an engagement of honour. A few years later, perhaps, they tire. Then, according to the modern code, they are justified in breaking their oath, in obtaining a divorce, in sacrificing their children, in marrying again; and they can repeat this performance several times, if that be their desire. As all of us know, it has become a national scandal,—one of the gravest dangers that threaten our civilization. Surely, in such circumstances, we ought to take a most positive stand for the old and changeless ideal of marriage. Divorce at times is undoubtedly necessary. If a husband becomes a drunkard, and amuses himself by throwing his wife and children downstairs, I should say that the poor woman's first duty would be to her children, and that she ought to obtain a divorce as quickly as possible. But this does not mean that she can be justified

morally in marrying again. Divorce is a legal procedure; marriage is that, and something more, much more."

"I should like to make sure that I have understood you", interjected the Student, perhaps not entirely for his own benefit. "You said that marriage is either a sacrament or a sacrilege. You would agree, however, that few to-day are in the least capable of appreciating this in its true and deep significance?"

"I entirely agree", the Philosopher answered; "but what they do know, and are quite able to understand *if they choose*, is that a promise is a promise, an oath, an oath, and that changing your mind does not change the facts. And men must be held to the standard they *can* recognize, if ever they are to see further. Closing their eyes to what they know, does not exonerate them: quite the reverse. Consequently, once a man has committed himself by marrying, he is committed, and has to see it through or be dishonoured. Divorce does not end marriage; it only furnishes a possible *modus vivendi* where grave wrong has been done by either party, for the protection of the innocent party; but the marriage is not dissolved: only death can do that."

"When you say that a man must 'see it through', do you mean that if his wife goes off with another man, and then turns up later, asking to be taken back, it is the husband's duty to do so?"

"That is not at all my meaning. Apart from other considerations—and there are plenty of them—he owes a duty to the institution of marriage as such, and he would degrade that if he were to encourage by his weakness, or false sense of 'charity', similar misconduct by others."

"How would you define a spiritual union?" asked one of our visitors. "Would you mean a marriage that is celebrated in church? Would you give the churches a monopoly of establishing or constituting such a union?"

"I would not", was the reply. "A spiritual union would mean to me exactly what the words imply—*a great deal;* but such unions are very rare, perhaps one in a million marriages. In the old days, however, when marriages were practically indissoluble, they often became more and more real, more and more spiritual, as the years passed. Many a marriage has been made perfect in death,—not before.

"But in further reply to the second part of your question, if we were to grant our churches the monopoly of which you spoke, we should logically exclude the millions of Buddhists, Mohammedans, Hindus and so forth, from the possibility of real marriage: which would be absurd. No student of Theosophy would do that. Nor would any student of Theosophy claim that only 'spiritual union' in the highest sense can constitute a real marriage: that, as I have already suggested, would be asking too much of human nature in its present pre-natal condition. What he would say is that every real marriage must at least begin with an invocation of the Higher Self, of 'God', as witness to the vows being taken. The result of this invocation should be to lift the two above the plane of duality, to the apex of the triangle, as it were, at which point there is unity: a trinity has been established,—and every real thing in this world consists of a trinity. The marriage service, in a church, provides that invocation. I repeat,

however, that this does not imply a monopoly, for Quakers can marry in that real sense just as effectively as an Anglican Archbishop or the Pope could marry them. The point is that God, the Holy Spirit, the Higher Self, must be invoked as witness and, in a sense, as participant. In that case, the vows are real; the marriage has been made real, and a legal divorce will in no way affect that fact. Further, while only a few will take things on this high (and real) plane, all must admit, as I said before, that a promise is a promise, and that an oath is taken to be kept, not broken."

"But don't you realize that not one in a hundred couples, married in church, so much as think of God, or even of their vows, from the beginning to the end of the ceremony? How many of them have the slightest realization of the solemnity of what they are doing?"

"So much the worse for them. You would not suggest, would you, that their preoccupation or lack of attention during the ceremony is an excuse for misconduct later on? They at least pretend to mean what they say. Why should a marriage vow be less binding than a 'debt of honour' incurred at a game of cards? What is thought of a man who pleads that he had drunk too much and that he ought not to be expected to pay? Don't you know that he is cut by all his friends for ever after? Yet he has not taken an oath; he has not invoked God as his witness: he has sat down to play cards on the implicit (not explicit) understanding that he will pay if he loses. Many a man has sold the roof over his head and more, to keep his unwritten word in those circumstances. He was a fool to have begun the game, you say. Of course he was; and most people are fools to get married as they do. But that does not affect the principle,—or the resulting obligation.

"The man who breaks his word, who violates his promise, nearly always pleads in self-justification that he did not know what he was doing when he gave it; that he had not foreseen the consequences. Monks who repudiate their vows, who run away and marry, almost invariably do this. But who can ever foresee consequences? If a business contract could be repudiated on any such ground as that, there would be an end to all business.

"Fundamentally the evil arises from the elimination of God (I use that term to cover all formulations) from human life, and from the growing conviction, in which so many of the clergy share, that man has a right to happiness in this world. The Declaration of Independence asserted his right to the pursuit of happiness, which was superfluous and foolish, considering that he had pursued nothing else, with most rare exceptions, from the time of Adam downwards. But the modern world has gone far beyond that: happiness itself has come to be regarded as inherently one of man's prerogatives—on his own terms into the bargain. As he has obviously proved incapable of finding it through his own efforts, it must be the duty, as he sees it, of his government to provide it for him. In any case, it is his right,—from which it follows that if he lacks anything he thinks he needs, or if he has a father or mother or wife who does not suit him, his sense of injury is so great, his grievance rankles so deeply, that no vow or obligation of duty, no law, either human or divine, can properly be permitted

to stand in his way. The married woman, for instance, with whom he happened to fall in love yesterday, must be his, because his happiness depends upon it: and the purpose of life is his happiness. For what else does the universe exist!

"It is there that Theosophy begins the conflict. The universe does not exist that he may be happy: far from it. The purpose of his life is to provide him with opportunities to become, by right self-conquest and right aspiration, a better, wiser, more enlightened creature as the result of his earthly experience. Further than that, Theosophy would agree with Gregory the Great, that 'joys are reaped in eternity only in proportion to the tribulations suffered in this world'. The man who makes happiness his objective, will never find it, either in time or in eternity. If, for instance, he loves a woman solely because he is happy with her, it is proof positive that he does not love her, and that he only loves himself."

"Really", said another of our visitors, "that is beyond me!"

"Read St. Paul's famous chapter on charity, remembering that the Greek word translated as charity, really means love. 'Love suffereth long, and is kind. . . . Love seeketh not her own. . . . Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' There you have the real test of love, as of friendship. Anything less is counterfeit. But there is a further truth, which cannot be repeated too often, partly because the world refuses to recognize it, and partly because, unless it be understood, the doctrine of Masters, the lesson of the Cross, become meaningless: that truth is,—the more we love, the more we suffer. And yet, to learn to love completely, with all your heart and mind and soul and strength, without a shadow of self-seeking, is the supreme purpose of our existence, just as it is the greatest of all rewards, the final recompense of every sacrifice, the very life and substance of heaven. A paradox, of course, as all ultimate truths are; but there is no denying the basic fact. You need only ask yourself whether a mother who is indifferent to her children suffers as much on their account as a mother who is unselfishly and completely devoted to hers."

"The logical inference from all of which is", commented the Student, "that, married or single, you suffer in any case: you suffer if you love; you suffer if you dislike—the closer the relationship, the greater the suffering; and as marriage is the closest relationship of any, marriage has been divinely ordained to accentuate the ordinary man's suffering, thus increasing the pace of spiritual progress, since, without suffering, man would stagnate and the soul would die. My inference would be that man's frantic efforts to escape from unpleasant relationships (as by divorce), merely because they are unpleasant, are repudiations, really, of opportunities devised by his soul, in other words, by the Lords of Compassion."

"Exactly", was the Philosopher's response.

"But practically", someone asked, "in what way can members of the Society take a positive stand 'for the old and changeless ideal of marriage', as you suggested they should?"

"You might just as well ask in what way can members take a positive stand for honour and honesty in business. Obviously we must 'begin at home': no marriages of divorced people in the ranks of the T.S., if you please! Divorce, as I have said, sometimes is necessary or unavoidable (any woman who chooses to allege 'mental cruelty' against her husband can get a divorce in some States, —and 'mental cruelty' may mean no more than inability always to get her own way); but new marriages of divorced persons are *not* necessary, and are fundamentally and everlastingly wrong. To that extent we can afford to be dogmatic and detailed. Beyond that, it is impossible to lay down rules and regulations covering all circumstances and conditions. Look in any good Concordance of the New Testament, under Marriage and Divorce, and see what the Master Christ and Paul his apostle said on these subjects. Priests draw up detailed rules and regulations about passing people on the other side of the street, about not eating with them, and so forth; Sages have never done anything of the kind. Sages enunciate principles, and leave it to you to apply them. A man of business who is a member of the Society, and whose own methods are above reproach (which is the essential), will have to decide for himself how to deal wisely and rightly with threatened or actual deviations, as he encounters them, either in his associates or in the circumference of his business environment. He must be courageous and unyielding, but, as the old-time Chinaman said, to be right without good taste, is to be wrong. In other words, deviations from right standards are often due to lack of thought, and we must not assume the worst, or give ourselves an air of moral superiority, in our determination to stand for what is best. When we are dealing with general conditions and with principles, we should take every proper opportunity to affirm our conviction that the least departure from what is right and honourable must result evilly, in the most practical sense, and that this applies, not only in business, but especially in the married relation, which involves so much more than contracts or agreements,—a consummation, preceded by an oath, with, let us hope, God invoked as witness."

"Are such trifles as painted faces and ensanguined finger-nails and purple or carroty lips, beneath your notice, or would you be willing to comment?" asked the same visitor, meaning to be jocular.

"Once more", the Philosopher replied, "members of the Society cannot control the universe, or women's fashions, or the perverted taste of men (though I have yet to meet the man who said he admired such horrors); but we *can* beg our own membership to set a right example, and to do their utmost to discourage every sort of indecency in dress (or in the lack of it), and every other practice which tends to cheapen womanhood. It is one of the mysteries of feminine psychology that while, for instance, if a man of the better class goes to a race meeting, he would never dream of imitating the dress and style of race-course touts or jockeys, a woman of the better class, and of unquestionable virtue, will often use such an opportunity to note every detail of the dress and 'make-up' of women who display their lack of virtue, and will attempt next day to turn herself into a duplicate, in appearance, of one or another of them. Feeble-

mindedness may be the charitable explanation. The fact remains that while vast numbers of women, whose outer behaviour is impeccable, paint their faces and deform their lips and finger-nails as you have indicated—and do so imitatively, unthinkingly, and without evil motive—the practice in itself springs originally from motives well summarized in the advertisement of some rouge or lip-salve which a friend noticed recently in a Subway train in New York. It read: 'Be as gay as gay Paree! Have that *come hither* look!' If any man wants his wife or daughter or sister to have that 'come hither' look, the sooner he is painlessly put out of existence the better for the world and for him.

"The practice is revolting, is vulgar, is fundamentally immoral. In its less offensive form, it is an appeal for admiration of which any self-respecting woman ought to be incapable,—either that, or a perversion (revealing her bad taste) of a woman's natural desire to 'appear at her best'. It cannot be done imperceptibly. Any man who is not as green as grass can see it yards away. Some women who have colour naturally, are suspected of 'make-up' unjustly, but only by people whose observation is superficial: natural colour comes and goes; the other does not.

"What ought we to do about it?"

The Philosopher laughed. "Always this request for rules, regulations, for specific directions to cover all cases! I have a young relative who married a girl with those horribly coloured finger-nails—or so I am told, for I have never set eyes on her or her nails. But they live on the other side of the globe, and while my opinion of him, for permitting it in his wife, has gone down to zero, it would never occur to me to protest or to interfere. On the other hand, if they were to visit New York, where I live, I should come right out with it at our first interview: 'Please, as a favour, remove that in my neighbourhood, because, first, the sight of it makes me ill, and, second, because I will not be seen in public with anything so compromising'. But I am old enough to be the girl's father or grandfather, and, if I knew of their visit in advance, should try to give warning through a mutual friend. Circumstances alter cases. The degree of relationship, of acquaintanceship, of responsibility, all must be considered. But a man who is forced into contact with a monstrosity of that kind, or with any woman who is 'made up', at least can get away from it as rapidly as possible—*and ought to do so*. Not only that: he should *want* to do so. Two of those carroty lips, flapping within a foot or two of one's face, make a normally-constituted man feel sick.

"I do not see how any man who loved and revered his mother, and who has been blessed with the friendship of one or more women who represented the best of their sex, can fail to carry in his heart an image of the ideal or to feel humiliated when he sees those who, supposed to be virtuous, adopt the tricks of those who are not,—not only humiliated but outraged, for they are a prostitution of what he holds sacred.

"That is why, in the matter of marriage and divorce, and in directions far less vital though in no sense unimportant (such as semi-nudity and 'make-up'), it must necessarily be one of the functions of The Theosophical Society, through

its membership, to carry aloft the best standards of the past, the highest ideals which the world so far has perceived, and, regardless of ever-changing fashions, to insist that when anything is inherently wrong, it must not be tolerated."

"May I change the subject?" one of our visitors now asked. "I heard someone remark the other day that Madame Blavatsky's writings are a potpourri of quotations from other people's books, and no more. Is there any truth in that?"

"Tell your friend to read what Madame Blavatsky wrote: he has not done so", the Historian answered. "Genius does not borrow; genius devours, it creates. Volumes have been written to prove that St. Paul borrowed from the Stoics, from the Mysteries, from the cult of Mithra. Critics of Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* have accused her of borrowing from Buddhism, from Hinduism, from the hundred authors she quotes. But St. Paul's religion was his own, because he had experienced it, not once only, but every day that he lived; and Madame Blavatsky *knew* before she had looked at the books she quoted, and before she understood any more of Buddhism or Hinduism than of the Binomial Theorem. Neither of them borrowed, and for the same reason,—total lack of need. They radiated light from within, and borrowing of any kind, except the borrowing of terms, would have paralysed their genius."

"Have you any comment on world affairs?" the Recorder now asked.

The Historian again volunteered. "Right and wrong, and considerations of honour, seem finally to have been thrown into the discard,—quite openly too", he said. "Italy, in the matter of Ethiopia, publicly proclaims herself a brigand: she wants, and therefore will take. England, mildly protesting, calls down on her head the abuse of the Italian (official) press. Whereupon the Prince of Wales advocates the fraternization of British and German War veterans,—his action being justified, in a letter I received from London, on the ground that England could not fight Germany and Italy together! To this I replied that if any such motive had actuated him, it would prove that he, too, had abandoned principle, in favour of a short-sighted expediency, as guide in international affairs, because clearly Germany had not been made less of a brigand by Italy's adoption of the same rôle; and that we ought to know by this time what happens when you try to off-set the scowls of one brigand by currying favour with another. Next came the Anglo-German Naval agreement, in direct violation of the Versailles Treaty, in open repudiation of England's legal and moral obligations to the other contracting parties, including France. Anyone who really loves England must have been grief-stricken. I tried to find comfort in Rudyard Kipling's article in the June *Nineteenth Century*, 'An Undefended Island', which shows there are still some who understand. *The New York Times*, always friendly to England, expressed pained surprise. The defence of the British Government has not improved matters: expediency required the agreement,—not honour, not righteousness, not fair-play, not any motive worthy of respect, but expediency: the fancy that she was protecting herself from worse. England! From every point of view, sheer folly: another 'scrap of paper' added to the collection, —as if anyone, not in an asylum, could be excused for accepting Germany's word, or written agreement, as insurance of safety.

"I doubt if English newspapers will report the effect produced in this country, not merely the shock to the few who love England, but the triumph of the many who dislike or are jealous of her, and who are now claiming that what they have always said is true,—that she is utterly selfish and disloyal. That this country is as bad or worse, makes no difference, for the average American could not and would not believe it, but, instead, will derive from the whole incident a further sense of moral superiority. It is terrible to see either a man or nation under the control of lower nature, sinning against their own soul (and England *has* a soul); so I deplore that Naval agreement as I would the behaviour of a blood-brother at his worst. France, alas, does not improve the general situation or her own record by announcing (*if our papers report truly*) that she will not oppose Italy by supporting Ethiopia's plea to the League of Nations,—as she had intended to do, jointly with England, until England 'sold her out' in that agreement with Germany. Right is right, and to act on a basis of resentment, no matter how well justified that resentment may be, or for supposed reasons of policy (the old game of playing off one power against another), is the opposite of acting on principle,—and there will be no peace in the world, or even its resemblance, until the leading nations at least try to be guided by their best vision of what is right and just and honourable."

"Now *I* want to change the subject", said one of our editors, smiling. "I want to ask a question which I am quite unable to answer: Why have there been so few mystics in The Theosophical Society, from its beginning in 1875 to the present day? Strange that it should be so, but it is the fact. I have often thought about it, and the 'Fragments' of this issue, so obviously written for mystics, revived the problem."

"What do you mean by a 'mystic'?" someone asked.

"I have never yet read a satisfactory definition of the term", was the answer. "Negatively, it is the opposite of psychism, of clairvoyance, clairaudience, and of other astral experiences. Dante was a great mystic; so was St. John of the Cross; so was St. Teresa of Jesus. Emerson was a mystic, expressing himself in intellectual terms. Every poet worthy of the name, is mystical at times: he sees transcendent beauties, sees into the spiritual heart of things; and he does not see vaguely, but with a lucidity impossible to express except in symbol, in paradox, or in some ultimate simplicity.

"Mysticism is of the heart, not of the senses. Mysticism perceives clearly, but is never cut-and-dried. The wider and more penetrating its vision, the deeper, the more sacred, the more awe-inspiring the mystery which it finds as the fruit of its search. For the true mystic, everything in unspoiled nature is a doorway to God. Francis Thompson was a mystic, though in no sense a saint. He knew, in his better moments,—

"O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee.

"But I come back to the simplicities. Consider Krishna's statement in the *Bhagavad Gîta:* 'I accept and enjoy the offerings of the humble soul who in his worship with a pure [not self-seeking] heart offereth a leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water unto me.' How many so-called Theosophists really believe and act on that, I wonder! They know that *chêla* means child; to what extent have they the hearts of children in their relations with their Master? Some of them call themselves Christians, and believe, theoretically, in the continued humanity of Christ. Does this mean that they try to please his humanity, as a child should try to please his father,—doing things 'very well' so as to please him, devising ways of pleasing his friends or his other children, so as to please him? Are they grateful for the gifts he showers on them—gifts not only spiritual, but most practical too—or do they accept these as if they had fallen from the sky, with a general sense that they are in luck, but that it would be conceited to suppose a Master would bother about *them?* Well, humility is a great virtue, *when it exists*, and nothing should be said to discourage it; but this suggestion may be in order: if you persistently thank a Master for gifts and blessings he has *not* bestowed on you, perhaps you will please him just as much as if he had. The heart of a child is a synonym for humility, and the heart of a child does not say, 'My father is too big and important a person to bother about me, or to be pleased with my small offerings of love and gratitude'. Naturally I am not speaking of the sort of child, the horrible sort of child, who tries to please in order to be rewarded—a penny for mailing a letter, ecstatic praise for voluntarily picking a pin from the floor; I am speaking of the loving and devoted child, whose chief joy it is to give the father a little human happiness in this parched desert of a world,—a world which treats him as if he were a wraith, or a well-meaning fool of long ago, or as identical with God and therefore so far off as to be negligible, or as a Master to be served at a respectful distance when time permits, or as a school-teacher with a stern eye and a cane under the desk, or as the Only Son who once made a painful sacrifice in order to wipe out our sins, but who now sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven, so all is well and we need not worry.

"Not many days ago it was said: 'Children, live for me'. The ultimate simplicity perhaps; as old as religion itself. If a man sets out to do it, though he start with no ray of light anywhere, he will find the heavens opening to show him the way. '*Children*, live for me'. Krishna said: 'In thy thoughts do all thou dost for me'. The same thing, if you choose; yet, not quite. The 'Fragments' supply a commentary based on experience, the fruit of love. Love is the key, love is the path, love is the goal. And if I am met with the old familiar wail—How can I love when I don't love!—my answer is the equally old and familiar statement epitomized by Emerson when he said, 'Do the deed and thou shalt have the power', with that recorded by Pascal,—to desire to love, *is* to love.

"How blind men are! That which desires, that which seeks, is that which is desired and sought. 'I long for the light of Thy Face, O Lord'. And the answer: 'Thy longing is that light, my child'."

There was a pause; then the Recorder said: "We have covered widely different topics. Will someone please unify them?"

"Perhaps that was best done for us, in anticipation, some five hundred years ago, by James I of Scotland", volunteered the Historian. "You may remember his *Kingis Quair*. The poem of his which I have in mind as showing the underlying unity of our talk, is the 'Ballad of Good Counsel'.

"Since through virtue encreases dignity,
And virtue flower and root is of noblay,
Of any weal or what estate thou be,
Its steps pursue and dread thee none effray:
Exile all vice and follow truth alway:
Love most thy God, who first thy love began,
And for each inch He will thee quit a span.

"Be not too proud in thy prosperity,
For as it comes so will it pass away;
Thy time to count is short thou may well see,
For of green grass soon comes the withered hay.
Labour in truth while light is of the day.
Trust most in God, for He best guide thee can,
And for each inch He will thee quit a span.

"Since word is thrall, and thought is only free,
Thou curb thy tongue, which power has and may;
Thou shut thine eyes from worldly vanity;
Restrain thy will, and harken what I say;
Grope ere thou slide, and creep forth on the way;
Thy promise keep unto thy God and man,
And for each inch He will thee quit a span."

"That is splendid", said the Recorder. "Thank you."

T.

The foundations of national glory are set in the homes of the people, and they will only remain unshaken while the family life of our race and nation is strong, simple, and pure.—King George V.

As the Spanish proverb says, "He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him." So it is in travelling; a man must carry knowledge with him, if he would bring home knowledge.—Samuel Johnson.

REPRINT

A LAND OF MYSTERY

These are the last two of a series of four articles under the same title, written by Madame Blavatsky, and printed in "The Theosophist" (then published in Bombay) in the March, April, June and August issues of 1880. The first two were reprinted in the April, 1935, issue of the "Theosophical Quarterly", pages 334-346.—THE EDITORS.

III.

THE ruins of Central America are no less imposing. Massively built, with walls of a great thickness, they are usually marked by broad stairways, leading to the principal entrance. When composed of several stories, each successive story is usually smaller than that below it, giving the structure the appearance of a pyramid of several stages. The front walls, either made of stone or stuccoed, are covered with elaborately carved, symbolical figures; and the interior divided into corridors and dark chambers, with arched ceilings, the roofs supported by overlapping courses of stones, "constituting a pointed arch, corresponding in type with the earliest monuments of the old world". Within several chambers at Palenque, tablets, covered with sculptures and hieroglyphics of fine design and artistic execution, were discovered by Stephens. In Honduras, at Copán, a whole city—temples, houses and grand monoliths intricately carved—was unearthed in an old forest by Catherwood and Stephens. The sculpture and general style of Copán are unique, and no such style or even anything approaching it has been found anywhere else, except at Quirigua, and in the islands of Lake Nicaragua. No one can decipher the weird hieroglyphical inscriptions on the altars and monoliths. With the exception of a few works of uncut stone, "to Copán, we may safely assign an antiquity higher than to any of the other monuments of Central America with which we are acquainted", says the *New American Cyclopædia*. At the period of the Spanish conquest, Copán was already a forgotten ruin, concerning which existed only the vaguest traditions.

No less extraordinary are the remains of the different epochs in Peru. The ruins of the temple of the Sun at Cuzco are yet imposing, notwithstanding that

the depredating hand of the Vandal Spaniard passed heavily over it. If we may believe the narratives of the conquerors themselves, they found it, on their arrival, a kind of fairy-tale castle. With its enormous circular stone wall completely encompassing the principal temple, chapels and buildings, it is situated in the very heart of the city, and even its remains justly provoke the admiration of the traveller. "Aqueducts opened within the sacred inclosure; and within it were gardens, and walks among *shrubs and flowers of gold and silver*, made in imitation of the productions of nature. It was attended by 4,000 priests." "The ground", says La Vega, "for 200 paces around the temple, was considered holy, and no one was allowed to pass within this boundary but with naked feet." Besides this great temple, there were 300 other inferior temples at Cuzco. Next to the latter in beauty, was the celebrated temple of Pachacamac. Still another great temple of the Sun is mentioned by Humboldt; and, "at the base of the hill of Cannar was formerly a famous shrine of the Sun, consisting of the universal symbol of that luminary, formed by nature upon the face of a great rock". Roman tells us "that the temples of Peru were built upon high grounds or the top of the hills, and were surrounded by three and four circular embankments of earth, one within the other". Other remains seen by myself—especially mounds—are surrounded by two, three, and four circles of stones. Near the town of Cayambe, on the very spot on which Ulloa saw and described an ancient Peruvian temple "perfectly circular in form, and open at the top", there are several such *cromlechs*. Quoting from an article in the *Madras Times* of 1876, Mr. J. H. Rivett-Carnac gives, in his Archæological Notes, the following information upon some curious mounds in the neighbourhood of Bangalore:—[1] "Near the village there are at least one hundred cromlechs plainly to be seen. These cromlechs are surrounded by circles of stones, some of them with concentric circles three and four deep. One very remarkable in appearance has four circles of large stones around it, and is called by the natives, 'Pandavara Gudi', or the temples of the Pandas. . . . This is supposed to be the first instance, where the natives popularly imagine a structure of this kind to have been the temple of a by-gone, if not of a mythical, race. Many of these structures have a triple circle, some a double, and a few single circles of stone round them". In the 35th degree of latitude, the Arizona Indians in North America have their rude altars to this day, surrounded by precisely such circles, and their sacred spring, discovered by Major Alfred R. Calhoun, F.G.S., of the United States Army Survey Commission, is surrounded with the same symbolical wall of stones, as is found in Stonehenge and elsewhere.

By far the most interesting and full account we have read for a long time upon the Peruvian antiquities is that from the pen of Mr. Heath of Kansas, already mentioned. Condensing the general picture of these remains into the limited space of a few pages in a periodical,[2] he yet manages to present a masterly and vivid picture of the wealth of these remains. More than one specu-

[1] *On Ancient Sculpturing on Rocks in Kumaon, India*, similar to those found on monoliths and rocks in Europe. By J. H. Rivett-Carnac, Bengal Civil Service, C.I.E., F.S.A., M.R.A.S., F.G.S., etc.

[2] See *Kansas City Review of Science and Industry*, November, 1878.

lator has grown rich in a few days through his desecrations of the "huacas". The remains of countless generations of unknown races, who had slept there undisturbed—who knows for how many ages—are now left by the sacrilegious treasure-hunter to crumble into dust under the tropical sun. Mr. Heath's conclusions, more startling, perchance, than his discoveries, are worthy of being recorded. We will repeat in brief his descriptions:—

"In the Jeguatepegue valley in Peru in 7° 24′ S. latitude, four miles north of the port of Pacasmayo, is the Jeguatepegue River. Near it, beside the southern shore, is an elevated platform 'one-fourth of a mile square and forty feet high, all of adobes' or sun-burnt bricks. A wall of fifty feet in width connects it with another, 150 feet high, 200 feet across the top, and 500 at the base, nearly square. This latter was built in sections of rooms, ten feet square at the base, six feet at the top, and about eight feet high. All of this same class of mounds—temples to worship the sun, or fortresses, as they may be—have on the northerly side an incline for an entrance. Treasure-seekers have cut into this one about half-way, and it is said 150,000 dollars' worth of gold and silver ornaments were found." Here, many thousands of men were buried, and beside the skeletons were found in abundance ornaments of gold, silver, copper, coral beads, etc. "On the north side of the river, are the extensive ruins of a walled city, two miles wide by six long. . . . Follow the river to the mountains. All along you pass ruin after ruin and huaca after huaca" (burial places). At Tolon there is another ruined city. Five miles further, up the river, "there is an isolated boulder of granite, four and six feet in its diameters, covered with hieroglyphics; fourteen miles further, a point of mountain at the junction of two ravines is covered to a height of more than fifty feet with the same class of hieroglyphics—birds, fishes, snakes, cats, monkeys, men, sun, moon, and many odd and now unintelligible forms. The rock, on which these are cut, is a silicated sandstone, and many of the lines are an eighth of an inch deep. In one large stone there are three holes, twenty to thirty inches deep, six inches in diameter at the orifice and two at the apex. . . . At Anchi, on the Rimac river, upon the face of a perpendicular wall 200 feet above the river-bed, there are two hieroglyphics, representing an imperfect *B* and a perfect *D*. In a crevice below them, near the river, were found buried 25,000 dollars' worth of gold and silver; when the Incas learned of the murder of their chief, what did they do with the gold they were bringing for his ransom? Rumour says they buried it. . . . May not these markings at Yonan tell something, since they are on the road and near to the Incal city?"

The above was published in November, 1878. When in October, 1877, in my work *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, p. 595), I gave a legend, which, for circumstances too long to explain, I hold to be perfectly trustworthy, relating to these same buried treasures for the Inca's ransom, a journal more satirical than polite classed it with the tales of Baron Münchausen. The secret was revealed to me by a Peruvian. At Arica, going from Lima, there stands an enormous rock, which tradition points to as the tomb of the Incas. As the last rays of the setting sun strike the face of the rock, one can see curious hieroglyphics inscribed

upon it. These characters form one of the land-marks that show how to get at the immense treasures buried in subterranean corridors. The details are given in *Isis*, and I will not repeat them. Strong corroborative evidence is now found in more than one recent scientific work; and the statement may be less pooh-poohed now than it was then. Some miles beyond Yonan, on a ridge of a mountain 700 feet above the river, are the walls of another city. Six and twelve miles further are extensive walls and terraces; seventy-eight miles from the coast, "you zigzag up the mountain side 7,000 feet, then descend 2,000" to arrive at Coxamolca, the city where, unto this day, stands the house in which Atahualpa, the unfortunate Inca, was held prisoner by the treacherous Pizarro. It is the house which the Inca "promised to fill with gold as high as he could reach, in exchange for his liberty" in 1532; he did fill it with 17,500,000 dollars' worth of gold, and so kept his promise. But Pizarro, the ancient swineherd of Spain and the worthy acolyte of the priest Hernando de Lugues, murdered him, notwithstanding his pledge of honour. Three miles from this town, "there is a wall of unknown make. Cemented, the cement is harder than stone itself. . . . At Chepén, there is a mountain with a wall twenty feet high, the summit being almost entirely artificial. Fifty miles south of Pacaomayo, between the seaport of Huanchaco and Truxillo, are the ruins of Chan-Chan, the capital city of the Chimoa kingdom. . . . The road from the port to the city crosses these ruins, entering by a causeway about four feet from the ground, and leading from one great mass of ruins to another; beneath this is a tunnel". Be they forts, castles, palaces or burial mounds called "huacas", all bear the name "huaca". Hours of wandering on horseback among these ruins give only a confused idea of them, nor can any explorers there point out what were palaces and what were not. . . . The highest enclosures must have cost an immense amount of labour.

To give an idea of the wealth found in the country by the Spaniards, we copy the following, taken from the records of the municipality in the city of Truxillo by Mr. Heath. It is a copy of the accounts that are found in the book of Fifths of the Treasury in the years 1577 and 1578, of the treasures found in the "Huaca of Toledo" by one man alone.

First.—In Truxillo, Peru, on the 22nd of July, 1577, Don Gracia Gutierrez de Toledo presented himself at the royal treasury, to give into the royal chest a fifth. He brought a bar of gold 19 carats ley weighing 2,400 Spanish dollars, of which the fifth being 708 dollars, together with 1½ per cent to the chief assayer, were deposited in the royal box.

Secondly.—On the 12th of December, he presented himself with five bars of gold, 15 and 19 carats ley, weighing 8,918 dollars.

Thirdly.—On the 7th of January, 1578, he came with his fifth of large bars and plates of gold, one hundred and fifteen in number, 15 to 20 carats ley, weighing 153,280 dollars.

Fourthly.—On the 8th of March, he brought sixteen bars of gold, 14 to 21 carats ley, weighing 21,118 dollars.

Fifthly.—On the fifth of April, he brought different ornaments of gold, being

little belts of gold and patterns of corn-heads and other things, of 14 carats ley, weighing 6,272 dollars.

Sixthly.—On the 20th of April, he brought three small bars of gold, 20 carats ley, weighing 4,170 dollars.

Seventhly.—On the 12th of July, he came with forty-seven bars, 14 to 21 carats ley, weighing 77,312 dollars.

Eighthly.—On the same day he came back with another portion of gold and ornaments of corn-heads and pieces of effigies of animals, weighing 4,704 dollars.

"The sum of these eight 'bringings' amounted to 278,174 gold dollars or Spanish ounces. Multiplied by sixteen, this gives 4,450,784 silver dollars. Deducting the royal fifth—985,953.75 dollars—left 3,464,830.25 dollars as Toledo's portion! Even after this great haul, effigies of different animals of gold were found from time to time. Mantles, also adorned with square pieces of gold, as well as robes made with feathers of divers colours, were dug up. There is a tradition that in the huaca of Toledo there were two treasures, known as the great and little fish. The smaller only has been found. Between Huacho and Supe, the latter being 120 miles north of Callao, near a point called Atahuangri, there are two enormous mounds, resembling the Campana and San Miguel, of the Huatica Valley, soon to be described. About five miles from Patavilca (south, and near Supe) is a place called 'Paramonga' or the fortress. The ruins of a fortress of great extent are here visible, the walls are of tempered clay, about six feet thick. The principal building stood on an eminence, but the walls were continued to the foot of it, like regular circumvallations; the ascent winding round the hill like a labyrinth, having many angles which probably served as outworks to defend the place. In this neighbourhood, much treasure has been excavated, all of which must have been concealed by the pre-historic Indian, as we have no evidence of the Incas ever having occupied this part of Peru after they had subdued it."

Not far from Ancón, on a circuit of six to eight miles, "on every side you see skulls, legs, arms and whole skeletons lying about in the sand. . . . At Parmayo, fourteen miles further down north", and on the sea-shore, is another great burying-ground. Thousands of skeletons lie about, thrown out by the treasure-seekers. It has more than half a mile of cutting through it. . . . It extends up the face of the hill from the sea-shore to the height of about 800 feet. . . . Whence come these hundreds and thousands of peoples, who are buried at Ancón? Time and time again the archæologist finds himself face to face with such questions, to which he can only shrug his shoulders and say with the natives—Quién Sabe?"—who knows?

Dr. Hutchinson writes, under date of Oct. 30, 1872, in the *South Pacific Times*:—"I am come to the conclusion that Chancay is a great city of the dead, or has been an immense ossuary of Peru; for go where you will, on a mountain top or level plain, or by the sea-side, you meet at every turn skulls and bones of all descriptions."

In the Huatica Valley, which is an extensive ruin, there are seventeen mounds, called "huacas", although, remarks the writer, "they present more the form of

fortresses, or castles than burying-ground." A triple wall surrounded the city. These walls are often three yards in thickness and from fifteen to twenty feet high. To the east of these is the enormous mound called Huaca of Pando. . . . and the great ruins of fortresses, which natives entitle Huaca of the Bell. *La compana*, the Huacas of Pando, consisting of a series of large and small mounds, and extending over a stretch of ground incalculable without being measured, form a colossal accumulation. The mound "Bell" is 110 feet high. Towards Callao, there is a square plateau (278 yards long and 96 across) having on the top eight gradations of declivity, each from one to two yards lower than its neighbour, and making a total in length and breadth of about 278 yards, according to the calculation of J. B. Steere, of Michigan, Professor of Natural History.

The square plateau first mentioned at the base consists of two divisions . . . each measuring a perfect square 47 to 48 yards; the two joining, form the square of 96 yards. Besides this, is another square of 47 to 48 yards. On the top returning again, we find the same symmetry of measurement in the multiples of twelve, nearly all the ruins in this valley being the same, which is a fact for the curious. Was it by accident or design? . . . The mound is a truncated pyramidal form, and is calculated to contain a mass of 14,641,820 cubic feet of material. . . . The "Fortress" is a huge structure, 80 feet high and 150 yards in measurement. Great square rooms show their outlines on the top but are filled with earth. Who brought this earth here, and with what object was the filling-up accomplished? The work of obliterating all space in these rooms with loose earth must have been almost as great as the construction of the building itself. . . . Two miles south, we find another similar structure, more spacious and with a greater number of apartments. . . . It is nearly 170 yards in length, and 168 in breadth, and 93 feet high. The whole of these ruins . . . were enclosed by high walls of adobes—large mud bricks, some from 1 to 2 yards in thickness, length and breadth. The "huaca" of the "Bell" contains about 20,220,840 cubic feet of material, while that of "San Miguel" has 25,650,800. These two buildings with their terraces, parapets and bastions, with a large number of rooms and squares—are now filled up with earth!

Near "Mira Flores", is Ocheran—the largest mound in the Huatica valley. It has 95 feet of elevation and a width of 55 yards on the summit, and a total length of 428 yards, or 1,284 feet, *another multiple of twelve*. It is enclosed by a double wall, 816 yards in length by 700 across, thus enclosing 117 acres. Between Ocharan and the ocean are from 15 to 20 masses of ruins like those already described.

The Inca temple of the Sun, like the temple of Cholula on the plains of Mexico, is a sort of vast terraced pyramid of earth. It is from 200 to 300 feet high, and forms a semilunar shape that is beyond half a mile in extent. Its top measures about 10 acres square. Many of the walls are washed over with red paint, which is as fresh and bright as when centuries ago it was first put on. . . . In the Canete valley, opposite the Chincha Guano Islands, are extensive ruins, described by Squier. From the hill called "Hill of Gold", copper and silver

pins were taken like those used by ladies to pin their shawls; also tweezers for pulling out the hair of the eyebrows, eyelids and whiskers, as well as silver cups.

"The coast of Peru", says Mr. Heath, "extends from Tumbey to the river Loa, a distance of 1,233 miles. Scattered over this whole extent, there are thousands of ruins besides those just mentioned . . . while nearly every hill and spire of the mountains have upon them or about them some relic of the past; and in every ravine, from the coast to the central plateau, there are ruins of walls, cities, fortresses, burial-vaults, and miles and miles of terraces and water-courses. Across the plateau and down the eastern slope of the Andes to the home of the wild Indian, and into the unknown impenetrable forest, still you find them. In the mountains, however, where showers of rain and snow with terrific thunder and lightning are nearly constant during a number of months each year, the ruins are different. Of granite, porphyritic lime, and silicated sandstone, these massive, colossal, cyclopean structures have resisted the disintegration of time, geological transformations, earthquakes, and the sacrilegious, destructive hand of the warrior and treasure-seeker. The masonry composing these walls, temples, houses, towers, fortresses, or sepulchres, is uncemented, held in place by the incline of the walls from the perpendicular, and adaptation of each stone to the place destined for it, the stones having from six to many sides, each dressed, and smoothed to fit another or others with such exactness that the blade of a small penknife cannot be inserted in any of the seams thus formed, whether in the central parts entirely hidden, or on the internal or external surfaces. These stones, selected with no reference to uniformity in shape or size, vary from one-half cubic foot to 1,500 cubic feet solid contents, and if, in the *many, many millions* of stones you could find one that would fit in the place of another, it would be purely accidental. In 'Triumph Street', in the city of Cuzco, in a part of the wall of the ancient house of the Virgins of the Sun, is a very large stone, known as 'the stone of the twelve corners', since it is joined with those that surround it, by twelve faces, each having a different angle. Besides these twelve faces it has its internal one, and no one knows how many it has on its back that is hidden in the masonry. In the wall in the centre of the Cuzco fortress there are stones 13 feet high, 15 feet long, and 8 feet thick, and all have been quarried miles away. Near this city there is an oblong smooth boulder, 18 feet in its longer axis, and 12 feet in its lesser. On one side are large niches cut out, in which a man can stand, and, by swaying his body, cause the stone to rock. These niches apparently were made solely for this purpose. One of the most wonderful and extensive of these works in stone is that called Ollantay-Tambo, a ruin situated 30 miles north of Cuzco, in a narrow ravine on the bank of the River Urubamba. It consists of a fortress constructed on the top of a sloping, craggy eminence. Extending from it to the plain below, is a stony stairway. At the top of the stairway are six large slabs, 12 feet high, 5 feet wide, and 3 feet thick, side by side, having between them and on top, narrow strips of stone about 6 inches wide, frames as it were to the slabs, and all being of dressed stone. At the bottom of the hill, part of which was made by hand, and at the foot of

the stairs, a stone wall 10 feet wide and 12 feet high extends some distance into the plain. In it are many niches, all facing the south."

The ruins in the Islands in Lake Titicaca, where Incal history begins, have often been described.

At Tiahuanaco, a few miles south of the lake, there are stones in the form of columns, partly dressed, placed in line at certain distances from each other, and having an elevation above the ground of from 18 to 20 feet. In this same line there is a monolithic doorway, now broken, 10 feet high by 13 wide. The space cut out for the door is 7 feet 4 inches high by 3 feet 2 inches wide. The whole face of the stone above the door is engraved. Another, similar but smaller, lies on the ground beside it. These stones are of hard porphyry, and differ geologically from the surrounding rock; hence we infer they must have been brought from elsewhere.

At "Chavin de Huanta", a town in the province of Huari, there are some ruins worthy of note. The entrance to them is by an alley-way, 6 feet wide and 9 feet high, roofed over with sandstone partly dressed, of more than 12 feet in length. On each side there are rooms 12 feet wide, roofed over by large pieces of sandstone, 1½ feet thick and from 6 to 9 feet wide. The walls of the rooms are 6 feet thick, and have some loopholes in them, probably for ventilation. In the floor of this passage there is a very narrow entrance to a subterranean passage that passes beneath the river to the other side. From this many huacas, stone drinking-vessels, instruments of copper and silver, and a skeleton of an Indian, sitting, were taken. The greater part of these ruins were situated over aqueducts. The bridge to these castles is made of three stones of dressed granite, 24 feet long, 2 feet wide by 1½ thick. Some of the granite stones are covered with hieroglyphics.

At Corralones, 24 miles from Arequipa, there are hieroglyphics engraved on masses of granite, which appear as if painted with chalk. There are figures of men, llamas, circles, parallelograms, letters as an R and an O, and even remains of a system of astronomy.

At Huaytar, in the province of Castro Virreina, there is an edifice with the same engravings.

At Nazca, in the province of Ica, there are some wonderful ruins of aqueducts, four to five feet high and 3 feet wide, very straight, double-walled, of unfinished stone, flagged on top.

At Quelap, not far from Chochapayas, there have lately been examined some extensive works: a wall of dressed stone, 560 feet wide, 3,660 long, and 150 feet high; the lower part is solid. Another wall above this has 600 feet length, 500 width, and the same elevation of 150 feet. There are niches over both walls, three feet long, one-and-a-half wide and thick, containing the remains of those ancient inhabitants, some naked, others enveloped in shawls of cotton of distinct colours and well embroidered. . . .

Following the entrances of the second and highest wall, there are other sepulchres like small ovens, six feet high and twenty-four in circumference; in their base are flags, upon which some cadavers reposed. On the north side there is,

on the perpendicular rocky side of the mountain, a brick wall, having small windows, 600 feet from the bottom. *No reason for this*, nor means of approach, can now be found. The skilful construction of utensils of gold and silver that were found here, the ingenuity and solidity of this gigantic work of dressed stone, make it also probably of pre-Incal date. . . . Estimating five hundred ravines in the 1,200 miles of Peru, and ten miles of terraces of fifty tiers to each ravine, which would only be five miles of fifty tiers to each side, we have 250,000 miles of stone wall, averaging three to four feet high—enough to encircle this globe ten times. Surprising as these estimates may seem, I am fully convinced that an actual measurement would more than double them, for these ravines vary from 30 to 100 miles in length. While at San Mateo, a town in the valley of the River Rimac, where the mountains rise to a height of 1,500 or 2,000 feet above the river bed, I counted two hundred tiers, none of which were less than four and many more than six miles long.

"Who then", very pertinently enquires Mr. Heath, "were these people, cutting through sixty miles of granite; transplanting blocks of hard porphyry, of Baalbec dimensions, miles from the place where quarried, across valleys thousands of feet deep, over mountains, along plains, leaving no trace of how or where they carried them; people (said to be) ignorant of the use of word [?], with the feeble llama their only beast of burden; who after having brought these stones fitted them into stones with Mosaic precision; terracing thousands of miles of mountain side; building hills of adobes and earth, and huge cities; leaving works in clay, stone, copper, silver, gold, and embroidery, many of which cannot be duplicated at the present age; people apparently vying with Dives in riches, Hercules in strength and energy, and the ant and bee in industry?"

Callao was submerged in 1746, and entirely destroyed. Lima was ruined in 1678; in 1746 only 20 houses out of 3,000 were left standing, while the ancient cities in the Huatica and Lurin valleys still remain in a comparatively good state of preservation. San Miguel de Puiro, founded by Pizarro in 1531, was entirely destroyed in 1855, while the old ruins near by suffered little. Arequipa was thrown down in August, 1868, but the ruins near show no change. In engineering, at least, the present may learn from the past. We hope to show it may in most things else.

IV.

To refer all these cyclopean constructions, then, to the days of the Incas is, as we have shown before, more inconsistent yet, and seems even a greater fallacy than that too common one of attributing every rock-temple of India to Buddhist excavators. As many authorities show—Dr. Heath among the rest—Incal history only dates back to the eleventh century, A.D., and the period, from that time to the Conquest, is utterly insufficient to account for such grandiose and innumerable works; nor do the Spanish historians know much of them. Nor again, must we forget that the temples of heathendom were odious to the narrow bigotry of the Roman Catholic fanatics of those days; and that, whenever the chance offered, they either converted them into Christian churches or

razed them to the ground. Another strong objection to the idea lies in the fact that the Incas were destitute of a written language, and that these antique relics of bygone ages are covered with hieroglyphics. "It is granted that the Temple of the Sun, at Cuzco, was of Incal make, but that is the latest of the five styles of architecture visible in the Andes, each probably representing an age of human progress."

The hieroglyphics of Peru and Central America have been, are, and will most probably remain for ever as dead a letter to our cryptographers as they were to the Incas. The latter, like the barbarous ancient Chinese and Mexicans, kept their records by means of a quipus (or *knot* in Peruvian)—a cord, several feet long, composed of different coloured threads, from which a multicoloured fringe was suspended; each colour denoting a sensible object, and knots serving as ciphers. "The mysterious science of the quipus", says Prescott, "supplied the Peruvians with the means of communicating their ideas to one another, and of transmitting them to future generations. . . ." Each locality, however, had its own method of interpreting these elaborate records; hence a quipus was only intelligible in the place where it was kept. "Many quipus have been taken from the graves, in excellent state of preservation in colour and texture", writes Dr. Heath; "but the lips, that alone could pronounce the verbal key, have for ever ceased their function, and the relic-seeker has failed to note the exact spot where each was found, so that the records, which could tell so much we want to know, will remain sealed till all is revealed at the last day" . . . if anything at all is revealed then. But what is certainly as good as a revelation *now*, while our brains are in function, and our mind is acutely alive to some pre-eminently suggestive facts, are the incessant discoveries of archæology, geology, ethnology, and other sciences. It is the almost irrepressible conviction that man having existed upon earth millions of years—for all we know—the theory of cycles is the only plausible theory to solve the great problems of humanity, the rise and fall of numberless nations and races, and the ethnological differences among the latter. This difference—which, though as marked as the one between a handsome and intellectual European and a digger Indian of Australia, yet makes the ignorant shudder and raise a great outcry at the thought of destroying the imaginary "great gulf between man and brute creation"—might thus be well accounted for. The digger Indian, then, in company with many other savage, though to him superior, nations, which evidently are dying out to afford room to men and races of a superior kind, would have to be regarded in the same light as so many dying-out specimens of animals—and no more. Who can tell but that the forefathers of this flat-headed savage—forefathers who may have lived and prospered amidst the highest civilization before the glacial period—were in the arts and sciences far beyond those of the present civilization—though it may be in quite another direction? That man has lived in America, at least 50,000 years ago, is now proved scientifically and remains a fact beyond doubt or cavil. In a lecture delivered at Manchester, in June last, by Mr. H. A. Allbutt, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Society, the lecturer stated the following:— "Near New Orleans, in one part of the modern delta, in

excavating for gas works, a series of beds, almost wholly made up of vegetable matter, were dug through. In the excavation, at a depth of 16 feet from the upper surface, and beneath four buried forests, one on the top of the other, the labourers discovered some charcoal and the skeleton of a man, the cranium of which was reported to be that of the type of the aboriginal Red Indian race. To this skeleton Dr. Dowler ascribed an antiquity of some 50,000 years". The irrepressible cycle in the course of time brought down the descendants of the contemporaries of the late inhabitant of this skeleton, and intellectually as well as physically they have degenerated, as the present elephant has degenerated from his proud and monstrous forefather, the antediluvian *Sivatherium* whose fossil remains are still found in the Himalayas; or, as the lizard has from the plesiosaurus. Why should man be the only specimen upon earth which has never changed in form since the first day of his appearance upon this planet? The fancied superiority of every generation of mankind over the preceding one is not yet so well established as to make it impossible for us to learn some day that, as in everything else, the theory is a two-sided question—incessant progress on the one side and an as irresistible decadence on the other [side] of the cycle. "Even as regards knowledge and power, the advance, which some claim as a characteristic feature of humanity, is effected by exceptional individuals who arise in certain races under favourable circumstances only, and is quite compatible with long intervals of immobility, and *even of decline*",[1] says a modern man of science. This point is corroborated by what we see in the modern degenerate descendants of the great and powerful races of ancient America—the Peruvians and the Mexicans. "How changed! How fallen from their greatness must have been the Incas, when a little band of one hundred and sixty men could penetrate, uninjured, to their mountain homes, murder their worshipped kings and thousands of their warriors, and carry away their riches, and that, too, in a country where a few men with stones could resist successfully an army! Who could recognize in the present Inichua and Aymara Indians their noble ancestry?" . . . Thus writes Dr. Heath, and his conviction that America was once united with Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, seems as firm as our own. There must exist geological and physical cycles as well as intellectual and spiritual; globes and planets, as well as races and nations, are born to grow, progress, decline and—die. Great nations split, scatter into small tribes, lose all remembrance of their integrity, gradually fall into their primitive state and—disappear, one after the other, from the face of the earth. So do great continents. Ceylon must have formed, once upon a time, part of the Indian continent. So, to all appearances, was Spain once joined to Africa, the narrow channel between Gibraltar and the latter continent having once upon a time been dry land. Gibraltar is full of large apes of the same kind as those which are found in great numbers on the opposite side on the African coast, whereas nowhere in Spain is either a monkey or ape to be found at any place whatever. And the caves of Gibraltar are also full of gigantic human bones, supporting the theory that they belong to an antediluvian race of men. The same Dr. Heath mentions the

[1] *Journal of Science* for February, Article—"The Alleged Distinction between Man and Brute".

town of Eten in 7 S. latitude of America, in which the inhabitants of an unknown tribe of men speak a monosyllabic language that imported Chinese labourers understood from the first day of their arrival. They have their own laws, customs and dress, neither holding nor permitting communication with the outside world. No one can tell whence they came or when; whether it was before or after the Spanish Conquest. They are a living mystery to all who chance to visit them. . . .

With such facts before us to puzzle exact science herself, and show our entire ignorance of the past, verily we recognize no right of any man on earth—whether in geography or ethnology, in exact or abstract sciences—to tell his neighbour, "so far shalt thou go, and no further"!

But, recognizing our debt of gratitude to Dr. Heath of Kansas, whose able and interesting paper has furnished us with such a number of facts and suggested such possibilities, we can do no better than quote his concluding reflections. "Thirteen thousand years ago", he writes, "*Vega*, in *Lyra*, was the north polar star; since then how many changes has she seen in our planet! How many nations and races spring into life, rise to their zenith of splendour, and then decay; and when we shall have been gone thirteen thousand years, and once more she resumes her post at the north, completing a 'Platonic or Great year', think you that those who shall fill our places on the earth at that time will be more conversant with our history than we are of those that have passed? Verily might we exclaim, in terms almost psalmistic, 'Great God, Creator and Director of the Universe, what is man that Thou art mindful of him!'"

Amen! ought to be the response of such as yet believe in a God who is "the Creator and Director of the Universe".

Over the Mountains of Time hover the Eagles of Time,—the Vultures also.

The Eagles soar, gazing at the Sun: the Vultures look down, seeking carrion.

Time, the mighty Illusion, raised those Mountains; and, while Time exists, over them hover the Eagles of Time,—the Vultures also.

Eternity holds them; verily, Eternity holds them all.—The Book of Birds.

On the Housetops of Time twitter the Sparrows of Time; they quarrel, they do not sing: they make litter and confusion.

The peace-loving drive them away; the earth-bound leave them alone, unheeding.

Time, the mighty Illusion, built those Housetops for man, while yet unborn, to dwell in; and, while Time exists, on them twitter the Sparrows of Time who quarrel and do not sing.

Eternity holds them; verily, Eternity holds them all.—The Book of Birds.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 64, Washington Mews, New York, at 10.30 a. m., on Saturday, April 27th, 1935, by Mr. Hargrove, Chairman of the Executive Committee, who served as Temporary Chairman of the Convention. A Committee on Credentials was appointed, consisting of Mr. H. B. Mitchell, Miss Perkins, and Mr. Kobbé, to confer and report at once.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Hargrove: It is my privilege to welcome all of you, visiting members particularly, to this Convention of The Theosophical Society. It would be impossible to do that without deep feeling; feeling, first and foremost, of gratitude; then of pleasure; because I think you will agree with me that the longer we work together, the closer becomes the bond between us—a bond that is stronger than death, stronger than any earthly bond can be. From one point of view, we welcome you to the firing line where desolation and death surround us, ceaseless danger,—and here in New York that is true in a very objective sense as well as in the deeper occult sense. We welcome you to Avitchi! But while it is true that this is the firing line, the front line (not front-line trenches, because as yet there are no trenches; they may come later), you must have read of those who, during the Great War, left the front line and returned to what had been home, and then, after an interval, went back to the firing line; and you know that many of them went back with a sense of relief, went back rejoicing, to what they had experienced as reality.

There is, however, another way of looking at it. Equally, I may welcome you to this oasis in the desert of the world, to this harbour in the midst of raging seas. And we may thank heaven that together, on this day at least, we can rejoice in the midst of that oasis; grateful from the depths of our souls for the gift that has been given us from on high.

We shall now hear the report of the Committee on Credentials.

This Report having been submitted and accepted, and the Committee discharged with thanks, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, President of the New York Branch, was elected Permanent Chairman of the Convention, with Miss Perkins and Miss Chickering as Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively.

Address of the Chairman

The Chairman: To speak first of what is uppermost in our thought, I would express our gratitude for the welcome which meets us as we come here, and which Mr. Hargrove has put into words. It floods the heart with gladness, making us realize that here we have come home. I think we all must feel this of the Convention,—that it is a return to the united spirit of being from which we individually draw our strength and inspiration. During the year we live as fragments of that common, overshadowing life, painfully aware of our inability to express more than some single facet of its many sided symmetry; but here it is whole, and, in unison with it, our fragmentary selves are supplemented, and something of its wholeness passes into us. As we went forth from it a year ago, so now we return to it, completing an annual cycle. What has that cycle brought us? What has it brought the Theosophical Movement? What deeper insight have we gained? How much greater is our power to serve? How much more significant, do we find the life about us? A cycle has been completed; if there has been nothing gained, then the year has been wasted. What has been the gain?

That question and its answer, the question which is repeated and must be faced as each cycle, great or little, comes to its end, is the theme of all I shall put before you to-day.

There are many reasons why this theme is of special concern to us. Our philosophy has taught us the determinative position of the great law of cycles in all growth, and has shown us that only as we adjust our activities to their changing phases can we carry our Movement forward from one cycle to another. From the harvest of the closing cycle must be garnered the seed for the cycle that is opening. In-breathing must follow out-breathing. Particularly to-day is our theme pertinent, for with this Convention our Society marks its sixtieth birthday. In none of its previous incarnations was the Movement able to survive the turn of the century. With us, a whole new quarter of a century has passed since then, and ten years more. We ask ourselves what those years have brought us. They were sixty years of labour and of sacrifice, as we know when we look at these pictures on our walls of H.P.B. and Judge, and of our predecessors who lived and died for the Movement; but also, as we know when we look to what we have ourselves received,—sixty years in which there have been poured out upon us the gifts of the spirit and the teaching of the Path, in which we have been shown wisdom and beauty and holiness and truth, and have been guided ceaselessly toward the source from which they flow.

If time permitted, I should wish to go back over those sixty years, both in the history of the Society and in that of the world, and ask you to consider the character of the vital changes that have taken place. As it is, I shall do no

more than note some of the crucial dates in our annals, that we may see in truer perspective the advantages we have enjoyed.

In 1875 the Society was founded. In 1891, only sixteen years later, H.P.B. died; and almost immediately the attacks began to which the Society was made vulnerable by Mrs. Besant's vanity and ambition,—proving again the age-old truth that where vanity is, there loyalty cannot be. As they came to a head, they swept Mrs. Besant and her following from the Movement, to revolve around it thereafter as a baleful, psychic moon. This was registered in the Boston Convention of 1895, in which the Society in America became free from Adyar. But within a year Judge died. He was scarcely forty-five years old, and it was only twenty-one years since the Society was formed. In that brief time he had made himself what he was, and had laid the firm foundation upon which all we have has been built. He did his utmost to live, knowing that he was needed, as there had not been time in which to make ready his intended successor; but he was killed at his post; and so, in 1897-8 there came Mrs. Tingley's debacle, in which the Society was all but destroyed. It was the end of the cycle, the crucial period precisely foretold by H.P.B. in her last words to the Society,—the Message she addressed to the Convention of the American Section held in 1891, three weeks before her death. The Message was reprinted in the QUARTERLY for July, 1934, where all may read her prayer that if the Movement were to fail, she might not be here to see it. We know that though it was brought to the very brink, it did not fail, but was carried over the crisis and the end of the century, into a cyclic phase it had never entered before. This was ushered in, as we know, through a period of indrawal and of silence, preparatory to the new advance which was begun with the founding of the QUARTERLY in 1903, and the resumption of the meetings here in New York. This period of silence, marking the transition from one cyclic phase to another, the in-breathing that must come between out-breathings, has very special significance for us now.

Turning from the Society to the world, we see a remarkable period of transition, and in one sense of attainment. All the marvels of our "machine age", of modern industrial science, have arisen in the sixty years of our Movement. In 1875, electricity, save for its use in the telegraph, meant little but a child's toy. There were no electric dynamos nor motors, no electric light, nor cars, nor telephone. There were no automobiles, nor submarines, nor aircraft. Africa was "the dark continent", untraversed, the sources of the Nile unknown. Our own West was undeveloped, still held by Indians and grazed by buffaloes, —Custer's massacre was still to come. The North and South poles had not been reached; large tracts of the earth were blank on the map.

This is of interest to us for many reasons; for, first, the development of electricity and the discovery of the sub-atomic forces with which modern science is now dealing, took place, and were initiated, along lines indicated by Madame Blavatsky. Edison was an early member of The Theosophical Society; and so was Crookes, whose "radiant matter" was the first of the phenomena that led step by step to our present knowledge of radiation and radio-activity. We still do not know *what* electricity is,—as the question was meant when science

thought it could be explained as a product of physical substance. To-day the situation is reversed. It is no longer sought to explain electricity in terms of matter, but rather to explain matter in terms of electricity. In it we touch something that underlies matter, exactly as H.P.B. insisted. Here science has reached a boundary of the physical realm. Of this we shall have more to say, but we must also note that it parallels the compassing of the earth, the reaching of the poles, the filling up the blank spaces of the map, the vast increase of population, the ease and speed of transportation and of communication. Jules Verne's *Round the World in Eighty Days*, the fiction of a generation ago, stands in contrast to the eight days of present fact. The paper, yesterday, told of a test performed by the American Telephone and Telegraph Co., in which two men, in two rooms some fifty feet apart in the same building in New York, talked to one another over a circuit that spanned the whole globe. The voice of one went east, the other west. It took less than a quarter of a second to travel round the world, though in doing so their voices went into to-morrow and back again into to-day. And when those two men had finished their private conversation, they talked to the engineers at the relay stations in Europe and Asia, who could "listen in", so that a dozen men conversed together from all over the earth, as though they were sitting in the same office.

The paper called this the "annihilation of the barriers of time and space"; but in annihilating one set of barriers it has brought us face to face with another, —the limits of our earth. The same paradox exists here that Mr. Hargrove pointed out existed in our own lives; for this sweeping away of barriers has done something that at first seems singular. It has made the earth too small. It has not made the earth greater, but smaller, so that we have compassed it about and filled it full. The old mystery that called to us is gone. The old spaciousness is gone. There is no more room in which to grow.

Many of us will remember a lecture, given by Mr. Johnston at Convention time years ago, in which he pointed out that with the reaching of the limits of our physical globe, man's life and interests must transcend the physical, or else turn back upon and stultify themselves. As Mr. Johnston made that clear to us then, the whole course of events has made it still more obvious now. I think it to be, as we shall see, the outstanding lesson of both the greater and the lesser cycle which we complete to-day,—the answer to the question we asked ourselves, as to what new insight they had brought us.

It is not only we who have completed a cycle; it is equally the whole thought of the scientific world, for physical science has pressed its explorations, as was never before possible, into both the very great and the very small, and has found, in a way quite unexpected by it, but in precise accord with the theosophic doctrine of correspondences, that they link hands. The explorations, moving in opposite directions, have come together, and together tell us of the limitations of the physical domain. In the direction of the very large, what has heretofore been regarded as unlimited—what we have spoken of as the infinitude of space —is to-day considered limited. The theory of relativity returns to the old Greek idea of the sphericity of space. Instead of the ray of light going on for ever, in

a straight line that "goes to infinity", it is now held to bend back upon itself in a huge circle, so that, after billions of light years, it would return to the point from which it started. There is thus a limit to the region from which messages, or impressions, can reach our physical senses; and our space, like the surface of the globe on which we live, is conceived as spherical. There is no "end" to the surface of the earth, no edge over which the waters of the oceans pour; but, though "endless", it is none the less bounded. Indeed at every point of the surface we are in contact with its limits. There is that which is above the surface, and that which is below it. And this same fact is true, in modern theory, of all things physical, and of space itself. All things of space and time are bounded by that which is spaceless and timeless, which presses upon each point and moment; and all physical things are in contact with what lies above and below the physical.

As research into the very large seems to reveal the limits of the physical domain, so also does research into the very small. The atoms, which the chemistry of a generation ago presented to us as indivisible and immutable, have been both divided and changed; and thereby the old alchemist—so long held up to scorn for clinging to the principle (which alone can give any of us hope) that there must be somewhere, some way, a means of transmuting the base into the fine—has come into better repute. It is not the atoms that are the ultimate building blocks of physical substance. The atoms have been shattered, and within them are seen electrons, positrons, neutrons—like the planets of a solar system, or a galaxy of stars—not "radiant matter", but rather a radiation of what has not yet become matter,—something that is at the very borderland of physical substance, and only partly within the region of space and time. There, also, science has reached the limits of the physical universe. It has compassed the whole physical realm, and thereby completed a cyclic round.

It is not one of the great "Rounds" of which *The Secret Doctrine* tells us, but it is something that corresponds to it. Within each great cycle there must be many little cycles, which image, each in its own way and scale, all that the great cycle contains. Just as *The Secret Doctrine* points out that each of the great cyclic Rounds developed a new characteristic of matter (a new aspect of the external, physical universe), and a new power of insight (or perceptive faculty or sense) in man, corresponding to the new quality in matter (the quality and the perception of it being but different poles of one thing), so in this lesser round, which science and the thought of the world have made, there should be a similar gain both in the enrichment of our environment and in our ability to see within it. What is the gain? Having compassed the whole physical realm, with what harvest does consciousness come back? What added power has it developed for itself? What new quality has it found in matter?

It is a very strange harvest, at least at first sight, and one of deep significance to us. The whole physical universe has been compassed, and from that compassing we have discovered that it is empty. We come back with empty hands, with a harvest of *emptiness.*

We used to speak of the solid physical world, of solid matter. It is no longer

solid. To the eyes of science, as Eddington says, the "solid" matter of this table top, is like "a swarm of gnats", of little specks in helter-skelter, rapid motion. It is like a galaxy of solar systems—a spark, a spark, another spark, and in between, nothing.

We used to speak of the forces of the physical world. Science no longer speaks of physical forces. In the physical world there are only the effects of forces. The forces themselves act from beneath or above the physical plane. We find them at the borderland of space and time.

We used to speak of the laws of chance, as though "chance" had meaning in and of itself and constituted some sort of agency that could cause events and could have "laws" governing its action. Most of the representatives of physical science still speak in that way, but mathematical science is no longer doing so. The popular ideas of chance have become, for the mathematician, merely naïve misconceptions of the significance of statistics and average values. The fact, if it be a fact, that of the population of Manhattan one-third are foreign born, has no bearing upon the nativity of any individual resident, though it would be popularly said that the "chance" is two to one that he was born in this country. Not even chance inheres in the physical world. It is a concept that has meaning only in relation to our own ignorance, and as applying to averages, not to individuals. What is the "chance", as I walk a country road, that the next house I come to will be on the right rather than the left? Of course, as roads can be traversed in either direction, it seems fairly obvious that, "on the average", there are as many houses on the left side of roads as there are on the right, and that therefore the "chance" is even. But as a matter of fact the next house is where it is, and it is only because I do not know where it is that I introduce the concept of chance. I do not know what factors will be dominant, nor what causes will be operative, when a race is to be run; therefore I ask what are the chances that a certain horse will win. All that we call chance is but a statement of the limitations of our knowledge, and exists only in relation to our knowledge.

The whole trend of modern physics is to stress this principle of the emptiness of the physical world. What we habitually call the properties of matter, the colour, the taste, the smell, the hardness or softness to the touch, are all things that are not really in the physical world itself, but are rather in its interaction with man's consciousness. At most the physical world is but a shadow-world of effects, as Plato represented it; a world of pointer-readings, as Eddington describes it.

Yet clearly it is a world capable of speaking to mankind, a world which, because empty in itself, can be filled from without itself, and can thus be made a symbol, a vehicle, for something which lies beyond the physical,—a messenger that can bear messages from the Transcendent Consciousness to the consciousness immanent in the soul of man.

We can liken it to the type from which a book is printed. Has the type, as metal, significance in itself? You weigh it and measure it and test it with acids, and you find no meaning in it. Its meaning is in the use that has been made of

it by some other consciousness to speak to yours. It tells you of something not itself: of colour and form, and fragrance and savour; of beauty and truth and holiness, of the properties of the transcendent consciousness in which the immanent consciousness can share; or, it may be, of things the very opposite of these, of things hideous and evil.

Thus we come back from the cyclic round that has compassed the physical realm with, as we said, a harvest of emptiness; and we are beginning to see what that emptiness may mean to us. Emptiness seems, at first, a strange gain for so much labour; but that it was to constitute our next forward step was precisely predicted by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine*.

On page 251 of Volume I, of the 1888 edition, Madame Blavatsky discusses "the sound but incomplete intuition" which led to the unhappy phrase "the fourth dimension of space", as a means of accounting for many psychic and physical phenomena, such as the tying of knots in an endless string, and the entering and leaving of a closed room, without passing through door or walls,—a power attributed in the Bible to the resurrection body of the Christ. It is pointed out that such a phrase can only mean the "fourth dimension of *matter* in space", and that even so it is an unhappy and misleading phrase, for it is not really a question of dimensionality at all, but rather of a new *property* of matter,—or, more accurately, a property of matter which we should now come to recognize and use. H.P.B. reminds us that each characteristic of matter clearly bears a direct relation to the corresponding sense or perceptive faculty of man, and that each of the great evolutionary rounds in the cyclic progress of life developed simultaneously, and as two aspects of one thing, a "property" of matter and a perceptive "sense" of man. The next property and the next sense which are to be developed, she tells us, may be described as "Permeability" and "Normal Clairvoyance", which is the perception of the spiritual significance within the material form. As consciousness and matter are but the two poles of the one reality, so this characteristic of physical being, and the faculty of consciousness which perceives it, are gained together, and both are correlated with the "emptiness" of the physical to which science is now pointing.

Permeability and emptiness are obviously much the same. There is clearly free passage through what is empty. A moment's reflection makes equally clear the relation between emptiness and significance. As Eddington has put it, the modern theories of physics make it much easier than before to take a spiritual view of life and the universe. In the earlier theories, matter was regarded as so solid that men fancied there was small room within it for anything but itself, and consciousness and spirit seemed to have no place with it. If you want anything to hold anything else you must first make it hollow, and this is what modern thought has done for the whole physical realm. It has made it so hollow that it can hold almost anything; so empty and without significance in itself that it can convey spiritual significance. We can look through it to what it reveals.

Consider how we read a book. In learning to read we began by looking *at* the letters, and laboriously spelling out the words. But it is only the proof-

reader who continues to read in that way, taking conscious note of the letters one by one. To have learned to read is to have learned not to look *at* the letters, but to look *through* them to the significance of their arrangement, being conscious only of the ideas that are thus conveyed. The letters themselves have become permeable to our thought; we see through them to the author's meaning, unconsciously passing from the physical to the psychic plane in quite normal clairvoyance.

It is the same when you listen to what is said to you. Waves of air beat upon your ears. Do you pay heed to them? The scientist could measure them: so many alternations per second between condensation and rarefaction of such and such intensities, which to your ears is sound. But that is not the way in which you listen to a friend's talk. You listen to his thought, which is not a physical thing, but which the physical sound opens to your consciousness.

So it should be with all physical things. We must learn to look through them to what lies beyond them. Thus the emptiness we discover in the physical world may, and must, be made a new doorway into the spiritual world.

The analogy of speech, which we have here used, is as old as man's thought upon creation. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." In it we can trace the twin development of spirit and matter, noumena and phenomena, of significance and of the form or symbol which embodies and conveys it. As spirit is for ever moulding and quickening matter to make of it a fitting vehicle for its incarnation, so thought moulds and quickens speech and manifests itself and incarnates in speech. But the moulding takes place while the thought is still hidden. It is only in the completion of the process that its significance is fully revealed. The verb is at the end, as in Latin construction. The thought builds up the sentence, word by word, but its active, incarnating principle is only reached as its final culmination. This is true in all of life. The end is present in the beginning, is foreshadowed and active and formative throughout, but is incarnated and revealed only as the vehicle is complete. Thus the next step which lies ahead of us in the spiritual evolution of mankind must already be foreshadowed in what is taking place in physical evolution. In this sense the scientific perception precedes the spiritual attainment,—as we begin to hear a sentence before its significance appears, though it is this significance that forms the sentence from its beginning. So science is to-day perceiving the emptiness of the physical world before the "normal clairvoyance", which is to use it, has been gained by mankind at large.

It will be well to pause for a moment to consider how grave are the risks that are inherent in this method of creative evolution. There is always the possibility that the form, created in the physical world to be the vehicle of a spiritual life and truth, may be filled by an incarnation from below and not from above. The world of form and manifestation, the physical universe, stands, as we well know, between two infinitudes, between the spirit that is above and the depth that is beneath. Every good gift that the world has received, every truth which

H.P.B. and Judge laboured and sacrificed themselves to teach us, has been perverted and made an instrument for evil in the world at large. The unity, which in itself every truth is, has been split apart into two opposites, and each of these opposites has been misrepresented and misused to the promotion of evil instead of good. Thus our teaching of Brotherhood was made a vehicle for envy and the desire of the base to pull down to their own level everything superior to themselves. In its name were perpetrated the hideous malice and murders of the Russian revolution, as of the French revolution before it, and in its name Bolshevism and Socialism to-day preach the gospel of class hatred. In like manner physiological and medical science have been perverted to Black Magic, to nameless cruelties upon lower forms of life, and to the grossest materialism in their treatment of human life. As we think of these things, we marvel at the courage of the Great Lodge, who have permitted truth to be given forth when they must have known the way in which it would be turned against them and against all for which they work. If we ask why it should be permitted, we can find but one answer. It must be that if a single soul use the truth rightly, for self-conquest and the attainment of illumination, as the Buddha, the Christ, the great seers and saints and sages of mankind have used it and attained,—that this one victory might wipe out and more than atone for all the defeats, so great is the value of a single victorious soul.

Surely the possibility of such a victory exists to-day as in the past. It is the possibility for which The Theosophical Society was founded, and to preserve which our predecessors gave their lives. Let us not forget our responsibility to those who have gone before us; for we make the past even as we make the future. Past and future are one, and the work of Judge, of H.P.B., of the Great Lodge of Masters in this century and the last, is now in our hands, to be proved by us a failure or success. Day by day we help to make or mar it, and we shall do this by the way in which we use all the circumstances and movements of our time, including our use of this growing perception of the emptiness of physical being, which modern science is bringing to the confirmation of theosophic teaching. To use it rightly will be to take the next step indicated in *The Secret Doctrine:* to make all material and physical things permeable to us: to develop the power to perceive the spirit within the form,—the power of "normal clairvoyance".

Let us consider what this should mean in our individual lives. First of all, that we should cease to think of circumstances as barriers,—cease to hypnotize ourselves into inactivity before imaginary walls of outer conditions. The walls are taken away; they existed only in our thought, for outer things are empty things. They are but a vesture, a cloak for reality. They are an open corridor, through which you may pass freely. Your circumstances are your way. You look through them, as through an open door, to the divine will for you. You accept and pass through them as you would travel a path that led where you would go. For that is what your circumstances are for: to lead you where you would go. Or, changing the simile, they are the empty vessel that your life is to fill with significance,—or the plastic stuff that you are to mould into the

likeness of your own vision of the True, the Beautiful and the Good. Learn to look within the outer to the inner, to see the spirit within the form, and you see at once that, whatever the outer form may be, it is always a way whereby to come to the inner spirit.

That is what we must strive to do. It must involve an indrawal, a pressing in from outer things to what will seem at first emptiness, a "cloud of unknowing", until we develop the new sense that enables us to perceive the spirit that fills it. Then we shall see that it was just such an "indrawal" as has brought us together at this Convention, a laying down of outer concerns that we may return to the source and centre, an in-breathing instead of an out-breathing, inspiration instead of expression. This will involve the putting aside of much that has heretofore occupied us, the surrender of much we may have thought of value.

We must not only learn to make our circumstances permeable—realizing that they "really do not matter, since in any we can accomplish our destiny"; we have to make ourselves permeable as well. The separate personal self with which you are now so occupied, is taking up room to which it is not entitled. You are treating it as a solid reality, whereas in fact it is as hollow as is the physical universe, and, like it, a shadow world of symbols whose only meaning is given them from beyond themselves, whose only value is in what it can transmit. You have to make it in your thought what it is in reality. You must perceive and make yourself empty, that you may be filled from above, instead of, as now, with your own vain imaginings. You must get yourself out of the way, and hereafter live with the single thought of making yourself permeable to a life greater than your own,—a clear channel through which divine inspiration and life can flow to meet the needs of the world.

Looking forward, as it is our duty to do to-day, to what lies before us, I can see nothing that seems of greater moment than that we should realize the meaning and necessity of the indrawal to which the cycle is pressing us. We have to dispense with the crutches of outer aid on which we have leaned, and learn to look within instead of without. We have to enter into emptiness and silence, until we learn to hear the Voice of the silence and to open ourselves to the new life that flows from above. We are drawing near to the moment of opportunity and of crisis, when the old personal life must be laid aside and the life of chêlaship be begun.

Our theme is too large, and has too many facets, for it to be possible to do more than suggest a few of the many ways in which it is of practical concern to us. It is illustrated on every side,—in the economic conditions of the world no less than in its scientific thought. What lies behind our "depression" if not this same lesson? Our civilization has plundered the physical world, drawing deeply from its sources of energy and of wealth, only to discover that in their very abundance they fail us. We have driven wells and drawn forth millions upon millions of barrels of oil that in the lesser streams of some decades ago meant riches and power, but in their present volume are all but valueless. For the value of oil is not in itself but only in its relation to something other than itself,

to some need of man or nature. And this is true of all things physical, for only the divine has value in and of itself,—only the True, the Good and the Beautiful. All else, in and of itself, is empty. So by his very materialism and his greed, by his over-running and plundering of physical being, man has come to the experience of its inability to satisfy him,—to the proof that he cannot live by bread alone, that in the midst of physical plenty his whole nature, even his physical nature, can starve,—that, holding the whole world, his hands are empty. He is experiencing this, but he does not understand it; and the empty silence which presses upon him drives him mad with fear. The world to-day *is* mad, not because it has entered the silence, but because it fears to. Yet there lies its next step, and if it will not take it, our civilization must fail and die, as have those that preceded it. We find it all set forth in *Light on the Path*, as it is set forth also that it is left for the individual to do what the world as a whole will not do,—to accomplish in himself the needed transformation.

So we come to our opportunity: to the indrawal to which the cycle leads us, to the silence through which we must pass to a new inspiration and a new order of life. It is not the first time that the Society has passed through such a period. Many of us remember the years from 1898 to 1903, and that the Movement came forth from those years, purer and stronger and with clearer light for the Masters' work. So, if we do our part, it should be with us in the years ahead. "When the half-gods go, the gods arrive." When the old life is put away, the new comes to birth; and perhaps, if we could see the truth, we should see that not since the inception of the Christian era has our western world confronted greater possibilities for good or ill than we face here to-day.

The report of the Secretary T. S. was then called for.

Report of the Secretary T. S.

I have the honour to submit the following Report:

In the progress of our work, as it becomes more interior in aim and accomplishment, there is less of significance to be recorded in annual reports. Service of the Movement cannot be measured by, "how many?", "where?", "how often?", "how much?". It is rather in the Convention addresses and the Letters of Greeting that we shall find the year's record.

Branch Activities

The reports from our Branches show a common spirit and purpose which bring to mind the maxim of St. Paul: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men". Special consideration was given by most of the Branches to the questions and answers about a Lodge Messenger that appeared in the Quarterly. Branches have used in their own gatherings the Reports of addresses made at New York Branch meetings; they hold special Convention Day meetings, with the purpose of both giving and receiving. The Arvika Branch drew material largely from Quarterly articles and New York Reports, translating these for its weekly meetings. It was reinforced by conferences with visiting members, one of whom gave a first-hand account of the 1934

Convention. The Aussig Branch also was greatly helped by a personal report on the message of Convention and its particular application to the Branch problems. The Branch Secretary writes: "Through the articles and reports we have studied, came many suggestions for practical endeavour to which we honestly tried to respond. At the meetings nearest to the anniversary days of our leaders, Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge, we sought to become aware of what we owe to these great souls, as to Mr. Griscom, Mr. Johnston and others also." In Oslo, the members are working to fit themselves to do effective service, when the tide in their country no longer sets so strongly toward psychic allurements. The anniversaries of nine T. S. leaders were commemorated with the thought of them "as still living and working for the Cause they loved so much". The Lodge Messenger is a subject which they believe all members will have close at heart during the Convention. The Branches in the north of England have maintained their occasional joint-meetings, which give stimulus and a feeling of solidarity. Mr. Mackey, the Secretary of the Branch in South Shields, reports that they were particularly interested in the "Screen's" discussion of the false standards that are prevalent in modern Christianity; and that the New York Reports have assisted very much in clarifying their vision and understanding. The Gateshead Branch goes steadily on with its studies, assisted by members of neighbouring Branches. The Secretary of the Newcastle Branch, Mrs. Cassidy, writes that they have been strengthened in determination to carry on the Work in gratitude for the life and message of H.P.B. Since three of their number are to have the happiness of attending the Convention, they all expect to share in the inspiration of it. The Whitley Bay Branch has been emphasizing, in its studies, the value of discussion, in which all participate actively. Mrs. Ross, the Secretary, says: "We are progressing, and things that were obscure are now clear". The Norfolk Branch is compelled by its scattered membership to hold meetings by correspondence. Clearly, its members *do* meet, in a very real sense, for Mrs. Graves, the Secretary, writes: "Each year shows definite progress in the comments on our studies that are written for circulation;—also there is a united spirit which is greatly helped by the Reports of the New York Branch meetings,—they serve as a real bond between our isolated group of students and our fellow members at the Headquarters".

The Cincinnati Branch has continued its study of *The Voice of the Silence*, with emphasis upon the difference between psychic and spiritual interpretation,—and has found aid in solving individual and collective problems. Miss Hohnstedt, the new Branch Secretary, writes: "Miss Agnes McCormack, our beloved and faithful Secretary, died recently. During the thirty or more years of her membership, she never missed a meeting except when ill or absent from the city. We know that she always lived up to the standard of her theosophic ideals, and have no doubt that she will continue to do so". The Middletown Branch, undismayed by the illness of its oldest members, has maintained its meetings and its studies. The President, Mr. Roberts, writes: "What we most desire is to develop brotherhood in our Branch; we are trying to make that a part of our lives, and also to arouse, in others, consciousness of the Soul". Hope

Branch of Providence has successfully carried on its accustomed activities. Its members have been specially impressed with the need to gain wisdom in order to be dependable workers. Miss Wallace, the Secretary of the Virya Branch, Denver, writes: "This year the interest has been less intellectual, centering more on conduct. The QUARTERLY provides much material, and the letters from other Branches, published in the Convention number, were inspiring and often deeply moving expressions of a close relation to the theosophic body." The Branch in Los Angeles began its session with discussion of the near-coming of a Lodge Messenger and a forerunner. "In the end", Mr. Box reports, "we all felt and understood the need for their coming, nor have we ceased to think about them. In our reading and discussion of the New York Branch Reports, we found that they were not only intellectually illuminating, but that they drew us inwardly nearer to the heart of the Movement". Of the Toronto Branch, Mr. Harris writes: "Our meetings have been interesting and useful; quite often we have visitors. At the earnest request of members, we have been studying *Light on the Path*". Members of the Venezuela Branch have worked unremittingly, to embody, both personally and as a Branch, the impetus which so many of their members derived from the last Convention.

Book Department

The sale of our books has, of course, been decreased in volume by the widespread financial collapse, but there is a satisfactory, steady demand for them. Our publications are not intended to cover the whole range of theosophic teaching; their purpose is, rather, to make clear certain basic interpretations of Theosophy,—and to show that the principles and standards of Theosophy offer the only adequate solution of the problems now confronting a bewildered and leaderless world.

Theosophical Quarterly

As one looks at the thirty-two volumes of this magazine, which fulfil the purpose of its founder and editor, Mr. Clement A. Griscom, that most faithful follower of W. Q. Judge, one is reminded of the old-time explorers, whose first act on landing in new territory, was to plant there the banner of their King. Outwardly that banner was a perishable affair, and so are the pages of this periodical,—but they have served to plant in the world, teaching which, once so clearly put forth, surely could not vanish with the crumbling of the paper on which it was recorded. The magazine has articles that may carry some of us into rarified atmosphere where our best endeavour results in little or no perception, but there is stimulation and promise for the future in the vistas thus opened. Many readers rejoice in the magazine's militant spirit. One of them writes: "In these days when so many things seem to be toppling about our heads, when values seem so distorted,—to find such expressions of truth so clearly and fearlessly stated, gives one a feeling of sorely needed security, and I never fail to get help and courage from them". The appearance of the magazine in representative libraries, the world over, is assured by interested friends.

Secretary's Office

In some quarters there is a mistaken impression that the Secretary is "too busy" to receive letters. On the contrary, correspondence is welcomed. The Assistant Secretary stands ready to assist in it as she does in many other ways. Branches and members have asked that their heartfelt gratitude be expressed to the Editors of the QUARTERLY and its contributors; also to those who speak at the New York meetings and to those who prepare the Reports. All are indebted to a member who has assumed the routine work of the Book Department; and the distribution of the QUARTERLY is another happy activity. Two of our youngest members address the envelopes for it, and also do the lettering for our membership diplomas. Copies of the magazine printed on "all-rag" paper are being preserved in public libraries, and for these we are indebted to the member who originated this provision for permanency. Another member has again generously reimbursed the Society for the sum deflected from its Treasury when the Executive Committee directed European Branches to contribute to some Allied War Relief organization the amount of their annual dues. One does not know where to begin acknowledgment of what the Society owes to our older members,—to those so closely associated with Mr. Judge during his lifetime. It is they who unfailingly note and interpret the significance of what occurs in the ordinary progress of the work at Headquarters and in the Branches; they support every whole-hearted effort to serve; they provide against misunderstanding before it develops, and are alert to see how all of us can be put at our best. Thus we of the rank and file, apprenticed to these trained workmen, can be used as links in the chain of the Hierarchy. What greater privilege could there be! No expression can be adequate, but I am sure that the entire membership of the Society would like me to say that we are increasingly grateful, and more than ever determined to justify their labours on our behalf.

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

This report having been accepted with the unanimous thanks of the Convention to the Secretary and to the Secretary's helpers, the Chairman announced the following three committees which he had earlier been authorized by the Convention to appoint:

Committee on Resolutions: Mr. Hargrove, Dr. Torrey, Mr. González-Jiménez.

Committee on Letters of Greeting: Mr. Kobbé, Mr. Carías, Mr. Saxe.

Committee on Nominations: Mr. Miller, Dr. Hohnstedt, Mr. E. Howard Lincoln.

The report of the Executive Committee was then called for.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MR. HARGROVE: *Mr. Chairman and Fellow Members,* At this time the Chairman of the Executive Committee ought to report to you the various difficulties which the Committee has overcome in the course of the year in the manage-

ment of the Society's affairs. Fortunately there have been no difficulties: you have not created any. The life of the Society has been serene and successful. Therefore, I have been deprived of all subject matter when it comes to events within the Society itself.

However, the Executive Committee has of course experienced outwardly very much what you have experienced during the past year, and I shall now attempt to report some of our reactions to those outer events, because the Society does not exist simply unto itself. Its function is that of leaven, attempting to leaven a very large lump, and it is a matter of vital moment to the leaven to know and to understand as clearly as possible what is going on in that very large lump.

First of all, let me attempt to deal with the surface of things. There is an international situation; then each member, depending upon where he lives, observes a local situation. As to the international situation, it must be evident to all of us that the world confronts the possibility, if not the probability, of another great war, probably worse than the last. The fact of the matter is, as we see it, that there is one country which is literally threatening war. That is Germany. There is another country in the world (namely Russia) which might at any time combine with Germany if it suited the policy of both to do so. Both countries would deny that possibility at the present time, but both of them being untrustworthy and bad, it is possible that they might unite,—because, after all, like attracts like. The immediate danger of war undoubtedly comes from Germany.

From England I have received a newspaper cutting containing information which has not been published in the American press. (While there is no official censorship in this country, nothing is given publicity which might arouse "feeling" and tend to upset the pacifist campaign that is being carried on vociferously throughout the United States,—this silence being the negative aspect of much German propaganda.) My cutting is from the London "Times", and contains a despatch from Reuter's correspondent in Munich. It refers to Ludendorff. We know that Ludendorff is a party all to himself. He is not Nazi. He is not anything but Ludendorff. At the same time, the Hitler party borrowed from Ludendorff a good deal of their ammunition, particularly their anti-Jewish ammunition. Ludendorff also represents a great deal of the spirit of war-time Germany. In this interview, which is unquestionably authentic, Ludendorff said, "I am not merely an opponent of Christianity, but literally an anti-Christian and heathen and am proud of it." "Christian teaching is there for only one purpose, to keep the Jewish people in domination." That is to say, the Christian churches—the Roman Catholic, the Greek Oriental, the Protestant churches of all denominations—exist for the sole purpose of keeping Jews in domination! I call this to your attention for the reason that it is a clear demonstration of lunacy. The trouble with Germany is that there is so very large an element of sheer lunacy in her mental content,—a total inability to recognize any facts which do not fit into her egotistical picture of herself and her destiny. That is one of the reasons why they are so dangerous. Unfortunately, another charac-

teristic of the German people is that they are very easily overstimulated, to a point at which they go clean off their heads. That happened during the Great War. It is manifest to-day. They are defying the whole world. From one point of view, you cannot blame them, because so much of the world seems to consist of the feeble-minded—not insane as Germany is insane; not drunk with their own emotions, drunk with self-esteem—but idiotic because of their timidity and hesitancy and lack of clear resolve to face the facts and deal with them.

The fact, then, is that Germany is threatening war. Speaking for myself only, I am more and more inclined to believe that there is no solution except in war. I may of course be quite mistaken; but considering Germany's attitude, considering the present condition of the German people, as led by Hitler, seeing no likelihood whatsoever that the feeling or attitude of that people can be changed, except as the result of a crushing defeat, keeping in mind the deplorable error of the Armistice and of the failure of the Allies then to complete their victory,—what other solution is there except war? England does not want war, and France does not want war. This country not only does not want war but is announcing to the four quarters of space that there is nothing that will induce her to go to war with anybody, at any time, or in any circumstances,—which, incidentally, is childish, because all that anybody has to do is to step on this country's toes, and all the emotion that is flowing into peace talk would flow, over night, in the opposite direction. America is one of the most "touchy" and quarrelsome of nations.

War, then, is the likelihood, as I see it. It might conceivably come this year. It might come in 1936. There is no knowing when. But we ought to prepare ourselves for it. We ought to face the probability. (I think it is a probability, and is more than a possibility.) We ought to do what we can as individuals and as a Society to remind the people of this country—and those who are English to remind people in England—that there are worse things than war, and one of those things is a dishonourable, a disgraceful peace.

We live in a materialistic age. Why is it that nearly half the ministers in this country are urging peace at any price? The explanation is that such men are rank materialists, merely calling themselves Christians. The terrors of life for them are death and poverty. Comfort is their God. They would not admit it; but what are they working for? I will not say for themselves. That would not be fair. But granting that they are unselfishly working for others, what is their objective when they work for others? Their objective is to provide others with more comforts in their homes; to "equalize" wealth; to compel more hours for recreation; above all, to reduce the death rate,—to postpone death as long as possible so that we may live in this—"vale of tears" it used to be called, but they are going to change all that and make it a vale of delight.

Under the head of recreation, this city alone is going to spend three million dollars during the current year in providing dancing lessons and similar "cultural" entertainment for the unemployed. All of which is proof (among how many other proofs!) that the trouble with the churches to-day is that they have

become contaminated by the spirit of the world. They have become thoroughly materialistic in their outlook on life. It is for us as members of The Theosophical Society to do everything we possibly can, first of all to keep ourselves uncontaminated,—clinging in spite of everything to the truth as it has been revealed to us; holding fast to spiritual values; forming among ourselves a group, no matter how small, of those who stand for the same principles for which Christ stands. Whether we call ourselves Christians or not, to-day it is the best of The Theosophical Society rather than the churches which represent him in this world, *and he knows it.* Therefore, for God's sake let us be true to our trust, true to our mission—because we have a mission, and that is to stand for what he stands for and to protest with everything in us against the blasphemies perpetrated in his name. It is a chance to make some return for what we have received. He and the Lodge are one.

Another way in which we should be able to contribute to the understanding of the world around us, is by suggesting the explanation of what is going on, the significance of what we see day by day, as reported in the newspapers and as we observe it in our environment. As students of Theosophy, what clues have we to the meaning of it? In the first place, understanding is based upon recognition of the age-long conflict between good and evil,—as we should say, between the White Lodge and the Black Lodge: conflict everywhere between good and evil, as it must always be until good finally triumphs. While, however, we know that good is certain to triumph in the end, we realize also that the duration of that conflict depends upon us, depends upon human response. For in our own natures as well (and our own natures are the key to everything) there is this conflict between the higher and the lower, between good and evil, and woe betide us if we are neutral or attempt to be neutral. The White Lodge cannot and will not interfere with the free will of mankind, either individually or collectively. Mankind, to make progress, must make right choices, and there must be freedom of choice. So long as man temporizes and will not choose, all he does is to prolong the agony and to make the fight fiercer when at last he is kicked into it—kicked into it not by Masters, but by life itself. But the time and the counting of days is not in the hands of the gods; it is in our hands, and in the hands of our neighbours.

Then, the world desperately needs a right basis for the interpretation of history, such as Theosophy alone can supply. As Professor Mitchell pointed out, the present and the past are one, and to understand the meaning of events to-day, you have to go back to yesterday and to a thousand years ago—as far back as you can go—and try to get some clue to the meaning of things. There are innumerable interpretations of history. Take a book such as that by Professor Flint, *The Philosophy of History.* He reviews the various schools of interpretation—the many German schools and French schools among others. Perhaps only one of them approximates in certain directions the interpretation which Theosophy gives,—that of Renouvier, the Frenchman, who wrote between 1860 and 1890. He called attention to the characteristic errors of men like Kant and Darwin and Lubbock, who theorized to the effect that primitive man

was similar to the savage races of to-day. Renouvier pointed out that there was no evidence whatever to that effect, but, on the contrary, much to prove the reverse. Renouvier pointed out that instead of there being evidence that man had ascended from savagery to virtue, he had, on the contrary, descended from innocence to vice, starting not with savagery but with innocence (in line with the teaching of Madame Blavatsky). Discussing the various explanations of the history of the human race—the economic interpretation of history, the theory that all progress is the result of economic growth, the theory that it is due to mechanical necessity, to climatic changes and so forth, Renouvier exhaustively analyses these theories, gives overwhelming proof that none of them can be true in the light of facts, and concludes by declaring (with much evidence in support of his thesis) that the underlying cause—not the only cause, for he gives full recognition to material and other factors—but the underlying cause, is ethical: that if you want to understand history, you must see it in the light of moral purpose,—which, of course, is what Theosophy would say. But Theosophy would go further than that, because, while it would see moral purpose back of it all, it would also see the guidance of the Lodge in encouraging every movement in human life that made for the moral, spiritual benefit of the human race.

Further, Theosophy would see that the life of a nation corresponds to the life of an individual,—a most important principle. Nations are far behind individuals in terms of growth and of development. At the same time, do not let us labour under illusions in regard to individuals, because there are not nearly as many *human* beings in the world as some people suppose. The vast majority are elementals in human form. A great many years ago, when H.P.B. was in London during the last years of her life, she was in the habit of taking drives in Hyde Park "for the good of her health". At last she gave it up. She said she could not endure it,—she saw too many soulless people. Only a few days ago, a very old student of Theosophy drove in and out of this city and lamented aloud. The streets were packed with people, and with automobiles of every kind, and the automobiles were packed with people. And this very old member of the Society said, Yes, packed with what?—with wolves and foxes, and multitudes of pigs, and with rats and with iguanas; above all with insects,—insects everywhere. Do not, therefore, let us labour under too many illusions, either in regard to mankind as it now exists, or in regard to nations. In the beginning, there is what we will call a potential soul, and the first purpose of the soul is to help in the development of a lower personality; to change, as it were, a congeries of elementals into a personality—that is to say, a person, who stands for something. I am speaking of a *lower* personality, but you have to begin with that before you can even think of the development of what we will call the enduring personality. That comes much later.

Now translate this into terms of national life. Going back over the history of the world, you will see that the effort of Masters in one instance after another has been to help develop a national personality. For instance, France, prior to the time of Jeanne d'Arc, was not yet a nation. Sections, waging war this way

and that: they had not been unified. France had not as yet become a personality, either good or bad. Even to-day, it takes a war really to unify her, though France now *is* France. Anyone can see in the history of England that it took centuries for that nation to become a personality,—the living "mask" of a soul (*persona* meaning a mask). The Lodge cannot do much with a mere congeries of elementals, typifying nothing, standing for nothing except for confusion.

This country is not yet a personality. It is still very young. It came much nearer to being a personality fifty years ago than it is to-day. Fifty years ago, the United States of America stood for something. Some years later, it stood at least for wealth. Now even that has disappeared. What does it stand for to-day in the eyes of the rest of the world? Just a mess! And we who live in the midst of the mess know that it *is* a mess, with Father Something shouting over the radio and Senator Somebody shouting in the Senate—everybody shouting, but everybody shouting for something different. Just a mess! We hope and pray that something will emerge out of the mess, but I do not see what is going to cause that unless it be steady doses of war. During the Great War this country was united, just for a few months. After there is enough of that, repeated over and over again, it may develop a personality.

If we will use that clue to an interpretation of history, we shall understand better the development of a republic here or a monarchy there, or an empire somewhere else. What is desirable is a form of government that will best meet the needs, and best express and focus the personality, of any given nation,—or that will best help to turn a congeries of elementals into a nation. It would be a calamity if England ceased to be a monarchy. A republican form of government is utterly foreign to the genius of France; her Revolution was a sin and a blunder. Russia exchanged a benevolent despotism for a diabolical tyranny, and may need to be ground into powder before anything good can again come out of her,—in which case she will do her own grinding, because to-day there is no nation, except Germany, sufficiently barbarous to do that sort of grinding properly, and for Germany to do it would make trouble for the rest of the world. To think of Russia as a republic, or as a democracy, or as a limited monarchy, would be laughable,—though that is exactly what Russian "liberals" and their English and French friends were doing in 1915-16. So far as this country is concerned, it makes no difference whether we call our present rulers despots (there are thousands of them), or the free representatives of the great electorate in the pursuit of its happiness. The facts remain the same, and the Lodge sees facts, not labels.

Allow me to repeat: if we would understand the present and get some glimpse of the future, we must understand the past, and must there see the gradual development of national personalities. When a nation has developed a personality, there comes the struggle between good and evil—just as in the case of an individual—the intelligence of a nation struggling against its blind passions; the greed of a nation, trying to push out its soul and its moral purpose; at one time, the upper classes (the king and the aristocracy) representing the best; at another time, alas not, but failing in their duty, thinking only of themselves,

so that the lower classes are more than justified in struggling against the evil they see embodied in those above them who ought to represent the best. Hence it is that the Lodge stands at different times and in different circumstances for different forms of government, but in all times and in all periods, strives first for the formation and then for the perfecting of nations as personalities.

History is, indeed, not only a fascinating but a most instructive and helpful study, that is, if we use the key Theosophy offers us, if we interpret national life in terms of the seven principles of man, if we have so learned to understand ourselves that we know something at least both of good and of evil; for in that case we shall be able to use our knowledge in the reading of life as it flows through time into the present. We must remember, however, that the Lodge prepares for hundreds of years ahead. The moves it is making to-day are for the future. I am not a chess player, but I have always understood that a first-class chess player makes moves in the same way. He plans far ahead. That which he does now is intended to bear fruit a dozen moves ahead or more. The same thing is true, of course, of an expert in business. He does not live from hand to mouth, or from day to day. He plans five or ten years ahead. That is one of the differences between a big and a little man. It was said of Kitchener that he was working for a hundred years ahead. In the same way, "moves" made by the Lodge a thousand years ago or more, which may seem historically to have been conclusive at the time, in many cases have not come to fruition even now. This applies to the migration of races as to all else.

Theosophy, then, gives us this manifold opportunity: a chance to understand ourselves and thus to see beneath the surface of events and persons; a chance to understand history, and thus to interpret more intelligently both the present and the signs pointing to the future. We are also given the extraordinary privilege of defending, in the light of Theosophy, the character and reputation of a Master such as the Master Christ, in face of the terrible misrepresentations of his own supposed representatives. What do we not owe to Theosophy?

The trouble with most of us is that while we say and really mean that we are grateful, we do not in fact even begin to *be* grateful. Here is this most precious jewel with which we have been entrusted, this splendour of wisdom, of light from above. Once in a while it dawns on us, perhaps at these Conventions, how great our privilege is, how unworthily we have used it; and in a sense we repent and resolve anew to strive harder than ever, not only to live the life but to read life intelligently. Every Convention gives us this opportunity for a new start, for a new appreciation, for a new delight in the gift we have received,—poured out upon us with inconceivable generosity. When I ask myself what a successful Convention would be, my reply is: one from which all present returned to their homes with joy in their hearts, because of the treasure they are carrying with them; but also with a deep resolve never again to waste their time playing with the surface of life, clinging with one hand to so-called sociabilities, squandering their remaining years on trivialities, on feelings that are as evanescent as gnats and which are contemptible if looked at truly.

Yes, a new life,—not only a new vision of heaven but, as Professor Mitchell

suggested, a new life in this sense: a clearer recognition than we have ever had before of the utter emptiness of what most people call life, of what nearly everybody calls pleasure; the utter emptiness of that and of the things which we call obstacles. Without any exception, whether those obstacles be inner or outer, they are of all empty things the emptiest. It is in our power to walk right through them. That was the lesson of the story in *Pilgrim's Progress*—of those roaring lions that filled Pilgrim with terror—for as soon as he screwed up his courage to approach them, he found they were chained. All of our roaring lions are chained, if we have the courage to walk right up to them,—even if they look like death itself. So what more can one say except, *Thank God for Theosophy!*

The Convention then adjourned until 2.30 p. m.

Afternoon Session

In continuation of the reports of officers, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, as Treasurer T. S., outlined the current financial condition in comparison with that of 1934, and requested recognition of the help he received, not only from Mr. Kobbé as Assistant Treasurer, but also from others including the Secretary of the Society.

After this report had been accepted with thanks, the report of the Committee on Nominations was called for.

Report of the Committee on Nominations

Mr. Miller presented the following nominations: for re-election to the Executive Committee, Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell and Mr. Auchincloss; also to succeed themselves, Miss Perkins as Secretary T. S.; Miss Chickering, Assistant Secretary; Mr. H. B. Mitchell, Treasurer, and Mr. Kobbé, Assistant Treasurer. It was voted that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the election of officers as nominated, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks. The report of the Committee on Resolutions was then called for.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Mr. Hargrove: Life has been so strenuous during recent weeks that your Committee has had no opportunity to formulate speeches in advance. The utmost that I can attempt is to refer to one or two notes, jottings of ideas, and leave it to you to form your own resolutions, if you will. So I begin almost at haphazard, by speaking of an exceedingly kind remark, made to me after this morning's session, by one of our visiting members. I had referred to conditions in New York, implying that they were not ideal, and this visiting member expressed gratitude for the sacrifice that we make in continuing to live and labour in such conditions,—sacrifice, presumably, for the benefit of others. To be frank, it was such a novel idea to me that I was more or less speechless for the moment, but then of course said the natural thing: that there was nothing of the kind involved. I mention this because it may suggest ideas to others. What are the facts? The fact is that instead of sacrifice being involved, I do not know one of us who would change places with anyone on the face of the earth. I do not mean that we would not change our inner selves; but so far as environment

is concerned, so far as circumstances are concerned, there is no sacrifice involved whatever. Of course, human nature is human nature, and I do not suppose there is one of us who does not think occasionally of some spot in Switzerland, in France, or somewhere else where we have been—thoughts full of beauty and peace—with longing to be there again. But surely a student of Theosophy ought to realize that such longings are dreams and no more. Wherever you go, you take your own nature with you; besides, peace is impossible except in the place where duty keeps you. I refer to this because it may be that some of you who live far from New York and who come to these Conventions and who, let us hope, enjoy yourselves while here, and receive spiritual benefit,—go back and wish with all your hearts that you lived here. Whatever our sphere of life, wherever we are situated, granting that our duty keeps us there, it is certain that that is the place which Karma (which means the Lodge) has selected as giving us the best opportunity for growth. Do not let us dream dreams of what we might become if only we were somewhere else. You may sometimes think of your circumstances as hard and difficult, and so on. If we, in New York, were to find ourselves thinking of our circumstances in this moral cesspool as hard and difficult, I pray that we should have sense enough to recognize instantly the old foul fiend of self-pity, and that we should peremptorily kick it out. What applies to us applies to you. There may be an intimation of a resolution tied to that idea.

Next, to pass to my second note, I should like to read something that bears directly upon what was said this morning in regard to pacifism, war and so forth. It does not matter who wrote it. Everything, in the last analysis, has to stand on its own feet, on its own merits.

War is a terrible thing, a monstrous thing: there is only one thing worse, and that is peace as the world understands it. A great soldier said once: "War is Hell". He knew of what he spoke, and meant it. It is the hell of flame and destruction, of torment and wrath, terrible to contemplate. But out of it rise heroes and heroisms; in its fires great causes are born, greater heights are scaled, and the record of human achievement in nobility and sacrifice is raised above itself. There is a deeper hell, which the great mystic poet has shown us,—the still and frozen hell of selfishness and malice, where men gnaw the other men frozen with them in the same deadly lake, kept for ever cold by the moving wings of the arch fiend. Only as the fire of struggle and suffering releases it, can the imprisoned soul rise above this horror, which is the expression and epitome of its present self, and shake itself free for its destiny of spiritual growth.

To timid and cowardly souls these truths are unpleasant,—who is there does not shrink from them at some spot? but truths they remain in spite of any and all unwillingness; and since God's relentless mercy pushes us on, we can go to our fate condemned and dishonoured, or meet it gloriously like men and win our crown. That much of choice we have. The modern world seems to be making it for the doom of its civilization, and so will sink beneath the waves of its own blood,—the fate of all who make the Great Refusal.

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Prince of Peace our Lord has been called, echoing the lyric strains of Isaiah; but the Master affirmed of himself: "I came not to bring peace but a sword". And while in his parting discourse with his disciples, he said: "Peace I leave with you", he called it *his* peace, and declared it was not what the world so named. In their after-lives, what

was that peace for them, but persecution and conflict and torture and death, and a ceaseless warfare in his name? No, only to the victor can there be peace; never, in all the seven worlds, to him who refuses the fight.

Needless to say, I did not write that, but I want to read it into the record, because it reminds us of the spirit of Theosophy and of The Theosophical Society.

Next, perhaps, should come some reference to the Lodge Messenger. Many of you will remember the discussion in recent issues of the QUARTERLY in regard to the next Lodge Messenger or forerunner, and you will remember also that, in the "Screen of Time", several letters were published bearing upon that subject. Incidentally, I received a letter the other day, thanking me as supposed author of the communication printed in the April "Screen of Time". Care was taken to say in the "Screen" that the writer of that communication, although a man whose membership goes back to Judge's day, occupies no official position in the T. S. In spite of this, my correspondent attributed it to me. I did not write it.

"Softness": in one of the earlier letters, which I did not write either, the astonishing suggestion was made (at least it proved to be astonishing to some) that the Society contained too much material that was soft—that the membership was inclined to be soft. There were those who felt almost as if they had been insulted. Others felt discouraged. In both cases it proved that in any case *they* were soft! Others reacted in a different way. They said: "Soft? Oh dear me! This will never do!" Then, assuming, for instance, that someone in this category was inclined to be a trifle obstinate, he resolved that "hereafter I am going to set my teeth—no softness about me!" The result was, he became about five times as obstinate as he had ever been before. So it went. Therefore, the question is, what is the opposite of softness? Let me suggest that virility is the opposite of softness. Let us examine the meaning of that term, because there are all sorts of people in the world who would think of themselves as virile. I am reasonably confident that Hitler, as he looks at himself in the glass, would say, Now *there* is virility! So you can go through a list of the prominent men in the world to-day,—of all nations. Yet, if you ask yourself, *are* they representative of virility, I am afraid that your answer will have to be in the negative.

Let us begin at the other end, following the theosophical method, and looking to Masters for our examples. Gautama Buddha was of the warrior caste. He was not a Brahmin. He was a Kshatriya. As you read the Buddhist Scriptures, you will find, as you find in the case of Christ, a marvellous blending, a harmony of different qualities. For instance, poetry and common sense, the one balancing the other and making at that point a perfect whole. Strength and gentleness, compassion and justice, energy and delicacy, dignity and humility,—as part of the true warrior's holiness. In the case of each of the widely known Avatars or Masters, if you will study what has been left to us of the records of their doings and sayings, you will find that marvellous blending, making up a content that is the very embodiment of virility.

Now let me try again. Let us examine another word: bigness seems to me to be of the very essence of virility—bigness of heart, bigness of mind, bigness of sympathy. Let me suggest that it is a touchstone that we should constantly apply to ourselves and to our own reactions. Take, for instance, our relations with other people, with our friends: are we little, are we mean or resentful, are we self-centered in our reactions to what they do, to what they think, to their moods and so on? Are we easily offended? Do we find insults, "misunderstandings", in what other people say and do? In any case, let us pray for bigness. We cannot possibly make a mistake if we do that.

Is our response to life generous? Generosity does not mean that you give away all you possess to the first man who asks for it. Not at all. In what sense was the Master Christ supremely generous? Consider his attitude toward the sinful woman: was not that of the very essence of chivalry, of generosity, of greatness of heart and soul? Yet he did not condone her sin; he did not plead "mitigating circumstances",—which is what weak and misguided "charity" would have done. He was noble, another opposite of softness.

Let us try another approach, because if we are to understand anything theosophically, we must approach it from as many angles as we can. I want to remind you of the time in Italy, in 1860 or thereabouts, when the Lodge was helping Italy to become a personality. (This is connected with what we were talking about this morning.) Italy was chaotic. There were the Papal States, the Austrian Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom, the Two Sicilies, the Kingdom of Sardinia,—and no personality. It is this that is of significance. H.P.B. in 1867, we are told, was present at the battle of Mentana. In 1860, Garibaldi landed in Sicily, at Messala, with his so-called Thousand Heroes. How had he collected those volunteers? What appeal had he made to them? He had said: "I call for those who want hunger and thirst and danger and death. I call for those who love their country with their hearts and not merely with their lips". And those who responded to that appeal, fought and died by his side. After Sicily came the march on Rome, and the battle of Mentana, and I remind you again that H.P.B. was there. H.P.B. wrote to Sinnett that it was only Garibaldi's sons who knew the inside of the situation and what she had done. The Masters were trying to help Italy to become unified, to become a personality. Here, I am going to digress, because the analytical mind at this point will wonder: Does that mean that the Lodge was backing Cavour, or Mazzini, or was it backing Garibaldi? And the answer to that is—the Lodge was backing them all! was working that Italy might evolve a personality. And out of this confusion and conflict, there *was* evolved a personality. They were all of them right, and all of them wrong—though H.P.B. happened to be fighting on the side of Garibaldi. It was the French, unfortunately, under Napoleon III, who, aiding the Papal States, defeated the army of Garibaldi at Mentana.

Garibaldi's appeal, then, was for *men*. Let us apply it, so far as we are able, to our service in the Theosophical Movement. Let us apply it as a test to our own attitude toward life. The old soldier who is really one-pointed in his determination to fight and to win, does not stop even to think about conditions,

does not care whether he is fed or not. If food comes, so much the better. It is all in the day's work. He does not say: I want danger, I want death. He takes that as all in the day's work too, as it comes. His mind is one-pointed. Yet there is that other approach. Unless there be something in a man's heart and soul that responds to an appeal such as Garibaldi's, he is not of the warrior caste. We need to test ourselves in these ways. To what extent has love of comfort swamped us? We live in an age of (I suppose it would be called) luxury, and it is very easy, living in the midst of this civilization, to become a victim of the desire for comfort. Of course, if we surrender to that, what it means is that we become soft, so soft that from the standpoint of the Lodge, we are useless,—perhaps a danger.

Virility: I repeat, if every one of us had watched our reactions to what I will call the accusation contained in that letter printed in the "Screen of Time", we ought to have learned a great deal. We were given an opportunity to check our own natures, and if our reaction was what seemed to us to be positive, instead of depressed and sentimental, then we ought to examine the nature of that positive reaction—because if it merely made us personally aggressive, then obviously the reaction was wrong. We have not, in that case, even begun to understand what real virility is, and it is part of our duty, as students of Theosophy, to find out what it is. To do this, we must think and meditate about it, taking examples such as I suggested: the Masters, above all, who, in the very nature of things, are the embodiment of it; and, instead of taking the world's understanding of their natures—and you know how the world has misunderstood them—we must use the light of Theosophy to see beneath the surface. Instead of seeing in Christ the "Pale Galilean" of Swinburne, the shadow-figure of so many pulpits, let us see that great Warrior and King such as he was—such as he *is*—and then let us set to work toward becoming some reflection (no matter how inadequate) of his magnificent manhood.

The next Lodge Messenger: we must learn of course to see beneath the surface if we are going to recognize any kind of Lodge Messenger. Suppose we had been in New York in 1874, and had met Madame Blavatsky as she then was, and Colonel Olcott as he then was, and Mr. Judge—a very young lawyer, just beginning, the reverse of prosperous: what would our reaction have been? Should we have gone through the usual motions of asking for their credentials? Should we have gone, for instance, to the Russian consul, or inquired from person to person, listening to everyone and everything except our own soul—and it is one's own soul alone that can recognize a soul. Therefore we have to learn, first of all, to listen to our own souls—not to our emotional reactions, but to our souls—if we are to be able to recognize a Lodge Messenger, or a forerunner, or any other reality, when we meet it.

No one has said when either forerunner or Lodge Messenger will arrive. People like to receive notice that they may expect such arrivals on a definite date. So far as I am aware, the Lodge does not do things that way, and we have to accept things on their terms rather than our own. It is more than probable that The Theosophical Society in all its manifestations will have to be cut down

to the root in order to survive until the Lodge Messenger appears. I said this morning that we are not at this moment in trenches. I said that the time might come when we should have to dig ourselves in, when, in other words, the very existence of the Society will be hidden from the surface of the earth, cut down to the root. What do you do with a vine? What do you do with many another tree or shrub? You prune, prune—and you *must* prune if you are to preserve the root alive. And what will be accomplished in this case is to preserve the root alive, that there may be new branches, and that, in due season, those branches may bear fruit. Go to the Parable in the New Testament, and you will see much of the hidden meaning. In other words, to make it specific, the day probably will come when there will be no more public meetings, no more QUARTERLY as we now know it, no more Conventions. There will be something corresponding to (only corresponding to) that period after the death and resurrection of Christ, when the disciples gathered in an upper room and waited for the coming of the Holy Ghost, praying, waiting for that which was promised *and which came*. These things are spoken of to-day that they may be understood later. Do not make the mistake of supposing that the Movement has been snuffed out, or that it has ended in failure, if you find that it is being cut down to the root. Indrawal means the transference of energy from the outer to the inner; it means the perpetuation of what otherwise would die. Would you wish a *simulacrum*, a decaying shell, to survive? There are enough shells of that kind, masquerading as theosophical societies, already in existence. It is we who must "keep the link unbroken"; we who, by living in the root, by keeping our hearts' energies in the root, will preserve its life that it may be ready to put forth branches and to bear fruit when the Master-gardener appears.

DR. TORREY (supplementing, by request, the report of the Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions): It is probable that most of us read "The Screen of Time" in the April QUARTERLY and will recall a quotation from General Weygand with the comments upon it. Briefly, the General is disturbed by the growth of scepticism among the educated people of France. He admits that it may be salutary to have a few doubters in a nation, but that when everybody begins to doubt, the situation is not so good.

My thoughts had been running along this line for some time, and the QUARTERLY, as so often happens, brought them to a focus.

It is obvious that the universities are the centres of this prevalent scepticism, and that from them there spreads out a wave which affects all classes of society. But when one looks more closely at the matter, it is not so simple First of all, it is not quite true that the colleges are in the grip of paralysing scepticism. There are two schools of thought on college campuses, just as there have been for many years—that of the sciences and that of the humanities. To the first, General Weygand's words hardly apply—at least not in the sense he is using them. Because downright scientific agnosticism is not scepticism. With it there goes a sublime faith that scientific research is still worth while because of its very definite pragmatic results. As to the ultimate nature of reality, or the

philosophical groundwork upon which science rests, the average scientist is slightly contemptuous, or even actively hostile to such speculations. As one of them expressed it not long ago: "I don't see how we can ever know or why we should ever care."

One might frame the working policy of science something like this: back in the last century some of our fore-runners got fully "fed-up" with the vapourings and idle speculations of the metaphysicians and other thought-spinners. Therefore they took their stand on what the five senses would reveal, not questioning any further, but attempting to analyse, to classify, to discover the laws of nature and to apply them to practical ends. The method worked; the method gave us progressive control over nature, and the method is still working. Our colleagues in the humanities accuse us of materialism and of fastening a materialistic outlook on the world, but we prefer our success to their tenuities which, so far as we can see, are barren of all results. *They* have ended in utter scepticism. We still believe that nature plays a square game—that we can put an honest question to her and she will give an honest answer. We find a sufficiency of beauty and excitement in playing this game, and we are willing to toil and sacrifice and suffer for it.

Now nobody can deny that science can put up a good case for itself. And I venture to suggest that its remarkable success is due to the fact that it has used to perfection the very instrument which was evolved to deal with the sensuous world in space and time. Many of us are familiar with Bergson's analysis of this subject. Mind is the instrument of desire; life would bend the material world to its desire for action. The intellect surveys a given situation and marshals the cogent facts before the bar of inner judgment. Then the will sweeps forward to its conquest.

So the scientist has faith—that supreme faith which is based upon repeated experience that nature will not "let him down". Obscurantists may say that scientific laws are only statistical averages—the scientist is undismayed. He sets up his experiential common-sense. So far water has always boiled at 100 degrees Centigrade and normal atmospheric pressure; so far unsupported bodies have always fallen toward the centre of the earth, and we are not worrying about the one chance in a trillion or so that they may do otherwise. I like this sturdy common-sense, and I think that Masters like it too, else one of them would not have written that "science has the right method", and that they themselves follow its discoveries with interest. Neither would they have sent their "Secret Doctrine" into the world, clothed in scientific dress. To be sure, there is a fringe of scepticism in science, but only when the scientist tries to turn metaphysician—when he attempts to explain causation, time and space, or vital phenomena.

Let us turn now to the other side of the picture. What has become of the devotees of the humanities during these years that science has been sweeping all before it? They attempted to meet science with the weapon of intellectual arguments, and they were routed and beaten on all fronts. And why? Just because they tried to use sheer intellect in a realm in which sheer intellect

cannot and should not be the final arbiter. In proportion as the unaided intellect abandons the field of sensuous study whose goal is *action*, and enters upon speculative criticism of faith, morals, ethics, etc. as an end in itself, the result will be, as it ever has been, increasing doubt and final complete scepticism. Why again? Because the only way these matters can be proved to be right or wrong is through action. Science has the right method, and if this be true of work upon the physical plane, it should be equally true of researches upon the psycho-spiritual plane which lies above the physical. But do we find the disciples of the humanities using the scientific method in this subtiler and richer field? Not they! That would involve the great battle of man to which Krishna invites Arjuna upon the battlefield of Kurukshetra, and they would have to make themselves the instruments of the experiment. A man will change anything rather than himself. The physical scientist can leave himself pretty much out of the picture and nature will answer his questions whether he be a good man or a thoroughly bad one.

The student of the humanities is faced with a far subtiler problem than is the scientist. He knows it, and he is contemptuous of the crassness of his colleague. Yet I dare to assert that his influence for materialism is far more powerful than that of the scientist. The scientist is dogmatically agnostic. Metaphysics is not my affair, problems of conduct are not my affair, he says. I deal only with the metrical world. In practice he is generally a conservative who accepts the conventions of society and lives by the accepted codes of Cæsar's world. His colleague, however, subjects the conventions to intellectual analysis; he dissects the principles of morality and ethics and impales himself upon a forest of horned dilemmas. He writes a "Preface to Morals", and ends by finding no moral sanctions whatever. He begins to take delight in destruction—in the play of his rapier intellect. Faced by a mind which is a match for his own, and which calls his basic premises in question, he turns ugly and accuses his opponent of mediæval credulity, pre-judgment, lack of the critical scholarly faculty, conditioning in infancy, or a high hydrogen-ion concentration of the blood (oh yes, they can use the scientific jargon of their colleagues when it is to their interest).

Now the practical outcome of this attitude toward life is that intellectual activity comes to be regarded wholly as a mental-emotional diversion. Poetry is to be studied for the emotional satisfaction which it yields. It is small wonder that a man who really does things—creates a new synthetic dye, invents a new and marvellous machine, conquers the stratosphere or the ocean abysses—looks with contempt upon this group of refined sensualists and æsthetes. He too, may believe that death closes the account, but he intends to fight a good fight while he lives.

In their different ways the two disciplines—that of science and that of the humanities—have both cut themselves off from reality. Science saw at the time of Huxley, and I think rightly, that speculation leads to sterility. The humanities have only at long last proved the truth of that contention. Both disciplines have reached again the conclusions of ancient degenerative phi-

losophy: naught remains but to eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die. Science has made possible the existence of a horde of mediocrities who depend upon it for their parasitic existences, and the humanities are filled with sentimental and fatuous weaklings who would provide softer straw for the scientific sty.

Out of the welter a few strong souls may emerge as incipient black magicians —such will be those scientists who continue to sacrifice sternly for their ideal of power over nature. They have faith and vision, and they are not going to perish right away. Some of their spokesmen sense that fact dimly already. Power *is* in their hands. One has only to look at the present scuttling to cover which is going on among the humanists in the universities, at the crack of the economic-scientific whip. One has small sympathy for their present plight. They were the guardians of the subtiler values of our racial heritage. They elected to make it a bridge to build upon and not to pass over. They entered not in themselves, and those that were going in they prevented. From the extreme dogmatism of the past, they have swung to extreme scepticism. In large measure it is they—the priests and putative guardians of the racial heritage of goodness, truth and beauty—who were responsible for the scientific revolt: that, too, can be laid at their door.

Thus far I have said nothing about the part which The Theosophical Society may play in this matter. How often have we been told that in a profound sense the fate of the world is in our hands. We remember that a few men could have saved Sodom and Gomorrah, and we recall Paul's words that "there are a few names even in Sardis". Is it expected that the members of the Society by their much talking and writing will bring about a change of heart in the masses, or even in any considerable portion of the educated? Try it and see! Lay your soul's inmost convictions and your most irrefutable facts before supposedly intelligent men, and see what happens. Do we expect to do what Masters themselves have not been able to do?

But perhaps there is a deeper significance in the thought. We are a part of our nation; we are likewise members of groups within that nation—of the university group, the scientific group, the military group, or what not. Each group is an entity made up of foolish, sinful and trivial elements as well as wise, good and important elements. In the sifting process to which all forms must sooner or later be subjected, only that which is worthy of immortality can possibly survive—only that which can be assimilated by the spiritual purpose, can become immortal—all the rest must be broken up.

If then, we love our nation, our science, our heritage of beauty from the past in whatever form it may have been transmitted to us, and if we have maintained our connection with the spiritual purpose which is its living heart, then it seems to me that it cannot be utterly destroyed. It lives in us, and as its unworthy vehicle breaks up in the world, we may carry the finer essence, the subtiler gains, into the inner world, just as the finer essence of our personal lives is harvested by the soul after each incarnation. Through us, in another time, the outer vehicle may renew itself. But if we fail, if we go to pieces with

the dissipating skandhas of passion and base desire, then, indeed, there can be no resurrection. The sacrifices of our predecessors may have saved the earlier phases of any system to which we may be attached, but each part of a system must itself come under the laws of the whole. Even as the world is sustained in all its parts by perpetual creation, so the world must be saved in all its parts by perpetual aspiration and sacrifice. If we would save the glorious discoveries of our sciences, and the richness of our poetry and music and painting, must we not relate them to their divine prototypes, and offer them up enthusiastically upon the altar?

Finally, why are we offered this mighty privilege? Somewhere under the sinful smallness of our personalities there is sincerity of purpose, ancient karmic connections,—and the majestic gods have set us once more at the post of trust and danger.

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The Chairman, after the report of the Committee on Resolutions had been accepted with thanks, called for the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting

Mr. Kobbé read the numerous greetings to the Convention that had been received from Branches and from members-at-large. The reading of these was punctuated with much applause. Extracts from these letters are printed at the end of this Report of Convention Proceedings.

The Chairman expressed gratification at the way in which not only the letters just read, but letters from distant members throughout the year, showed unity of thought and inspiration, so evidently derived from a common source,—proof of the reality of the guidance with which the Society is blessed.

The Chairman then called upon the delegates and visiting members to address the Convention, beginning with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln from Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, members of very long standing, but who were attending a Convention in New York for the first time.

Mr. Lincoln, after expressing his delight in being present at a Convention following his membership of thirty-three years, conveyed special greetings from Mr. Crawford and other members in England. He then continued:—As I look back to the autumn of 1921—the time when the "British National Branch" ceased to exist and the individual Lodges and Branches began to function—a number of things, all to the good, have since taken place. Each Branch, for instance, has had to stand on its own feet and strike its own keynote. This makes for strength and stability and self-reliance; it provides opportunity for vision and understanding. As the years have gone by, a certain contraction has occurred—in some cases by death, in others by change of residence, in others again by lack of interest or misconception of the Society's work. Whatever the causes, the few in each place are now carrying on the work in an earnest, determined manner; they are eager to be at one with Headquarters in spirit and purpose; they strive to sense the message and keynote that is put forward

from time to time and to embody it in their lives. As I have gone amongst the Branches, I have gathered that in this work and teaching is felt to be the salvation of mankind. "Man know thyself", practically applied, is what we need to-day. In the north of England, where the Branches are more or less close together, a united or collective meeting is occasionally held, and a paper or an address is given. This provides opportunity for expression by each Branch, so that all may benefit from the exchange of experience. In England we are down to the root, and we should be much stronger in consequence. Propaganda is neither opportune nor practicable. Most of us have to work for a living, and that takes up a considerable part of our time and energy. Yet, in such occupations, there is plenty of scope to learn and to serve. All this points to individual preparation and growth as being the essential factor at the moment.

Then there is the other side of the question regarding the step in 1921. We have received in full measure the spiritual outpourings from Headquarters in various ways. No labour has been spared (as for instance in the preparing and issuing of the New York Branch meeting Reports) to keep us in touch with the true aim and spirit of the Movement. These Reports have set a keynote and consecutive chain of thought for us to study and to apply to ourselves as much as possible. We have had the opportunity to weigh and test them from the point of view of the soul—that inner monitor which never fails—and so make the fullest response of which we were capable. The same applies to the QUARTERLY, which undoubtedly is of great help to members and a power for good in the world. We have also benefited by being more in touch with the Heart or Centre, and, by being united to it, have been able to co-operate more fully in the Society's work. Everything that can be thought of for our good has been done; everything that could help us to be more efficient instruments in the Masters' service. It was gratifying to learn through a QUARTERLY of not so long ago, that never had there been greater unity of purpose, oneness of heart, in the Society, than at the present time. So we in England have much to be thankful for, and, though few in number, would strive to do by real work and real effort what greater numbers with lesser aims could never accomplish.

We were not sure until shortly before we sailed that Mrs. Lincoln would be able to accompany me on this great occasion, and of course it is a great joy for me, as I know it is a joy for her, that she too could attend this gathering and meet those we have known for so many years. Both of us, and I think many others present to-day, have received in no little measure a lead and a light and a vision. Let us determine, then, that we shall more fully embody in our lives those things which we feel to be true. No doubt we have tried in the past to embody them, but speaking for myself, I feel that this visit means to me that I shall try as I have never tried before. I hope to carry back with me something that will impel me to live the life and to become, in some small degree, more like unto the Masters we are privileged to serve.

The Chairman, calling attention to the fact that a delegation of eight members this year, and of ten members last year, had come all the way from Caracas,

Venezuela, to attend the Convention, requested Mr. González-Jiménez to speak for the Venezuela Branch.

Mr. González: Our chief work has been to follow the topics discussed at the New York Branch. The fundamental note has been Christian: a study of Christianity in the light of the universal teaching of the Lodge of Masters, so far as we have been able to assimilate that teaching as expressed in Theosophy. We have come to understand that the heart cannot throb in love for Christ without at the same time burning the incense of its loving devotion for Buddha, Quetzalcoatl and the other Masters of the House of Wisdom. It was significant that during the year our Branch, that feels itself on the ray of Christ, should have given a special evening to homage and gratitude to Buddha.

The themes on which special stress has been laid have been humility, discipline and purification. Many members are following special exercises and specific rules with great hopes of pressing forward to the narrow gate of Discipleship.

World affairs have been considered with poise and definiteness, and the wish that the gods may descend is the prayer of many. The world cannot get back to high ideals unless centres of consecration—beacons in the night of Kali Yuga —be formed.

An understanding of fraternity, not as an equality without distinction, but as *a common effort* towards a unique centre, is to-day a possession of the Branch. Among its members more of an intimate fraternity is being lived, shunning debasing familiarity.

The Branch as a whole sends to the members of the T. S. assembled in Convention its most fervent wishes that the Lodge of Masters may look upon this meeting as an opportunity for the world to know of its existence, and to turn to it for the light and courage so needed to-day for men to discern the Way, and discerning, claim their place as sons of God.

The Chairman announced that a cablegram had been received from members in Caracas who had been unable to attend the Convention, but who wished it known that they were with us in spirit and in thought. He then called upon Mr. Carías, President of the Venezuela Branch, to address the Convention.

Mr. Carías: As Mr. Johnston said in the Introduction of *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, I believe that "there is Divine Wisdom, Godlike Compassion, that there are divine teachers, perfect in courage and love ready to impart that wisdom to all who can receive and possess it". I believe also that to reach such a great benediction, the fire of purification is necessary, conquering the personality by sacrifice, thus gaining the gifts of the spiritual world. . . . Let us remember the outstanding words of the April "Fragments"; let us engrave this idea as a mantram in our hearts: Courage to the last.

The Convention then listened with much sympathy and interest to reports of members from Czecho-Slovakia.

Miss Margaret D. Hohnstedt and Dr. Hohnstedt, welcomed by the

Chairman, spoke for the Cincinnati Branch, which, next year, will celebrate its fiftieth year of continuous work for Theosophy.

Miss Husby, called upon as the delegate from Pacific Branch in Los Angeles, spoke of the activities of the Branch as conducted by Mr. Box, and expressed the highest appreciation of the Theosophical Quarterly, which, she said, always has a message for the individual reader as well as making a universal appeal.

Mrs. Regan, representing Hope Branch, Providence, after mention of its activities, concluded by saying:—I doubt if there is a member in the Society to-day who does not love it, who would not sacrifice for it, who is not loyal and devoted, as he sees loyalty and devotion. We need to learn, however, what true loyalty is; we must acquire understanding and vision. It seemed to me this morning, as the keynote was struck, that we had been called to arms. What, as members of this Society, was our involuntary reaction to that? Was all the fight in us aroused? Did we want to stand side by side with those on this plane whom we call the "Ancients"? We perhaps cannot speak or write, but we can all *be* something, can all live according to our understanding of theosophical principles, can learn to withdraw from the world with The Theosophical Society, and help nourish the root. That is my desire: to stand firm for this Society which we all love, and with Saint Paul say: Let us lay aside every weight and press toward the mark.

Mr. Roy, having reported further for the Branch in Providence, the Chairman requested Mr. Miller to speak for the New York Branch.

Mr. Miller: We were reminded this morning of the cycles—the smaller cycle of a year, and the major cycle of sixty years—which we celebrate to-day. Those of us who have been members of the Society for a number of years and have attended Convention after Convention, who have been inspired by what we have heard, lifted above the usual level of our consciousness,—have realized, by the time the cycle of the next Convention returned, that we have fallen from the high resolve which we had made. But cycles proceed spirally, and if we remember that we meet the same difficulties on different levels, it will be helpful, I think, to prevent discouragement.

Anyone who is privileged to be here to-day must realize that there is a mighty force behind this Society. The question is, how are we going to use it? Are we going to allow it to run to waste? The answer to that must depend upon the degree of our "emptiness", as Professor Mitchell explained. We must empty ourselves of self, and then we can be victors in the fight and not lose courage,—because we shall not be thinking of ourselves.

Dr. Clark: In the older literature, the literature of fact which you find in Edmund Burke, or the literature of fiction which you find in Walter Scott, you meet with a repetition of such words as "principles", "loyalty", "honour", "fidelity", and so on. If you look for such words to-day in literature, or on the lips of people, you will hardly ever hear them. The older generations knew that the laws of righteousness had been delivered to them from above, and that

it was their opportunity, cost what it might, to act according to those laws and to live by loyalty, to live for principle, to maintain fidelity.

Is it not to-day the opportunity of everyone in our Society to seek to embody those divine laws which have been passed on to us, to resolve that these precious things which are so seldom heard from the lips of people to-day: loyalty, fidelity, life according to principle, shall not perish, but shall find illustration again in our own lives—we who have been so mercifully brought into this Movement, this Society, by the compassion of the Masters, and permitted to be present at this Convention to-day?

Mr. Auchincloss: At the meetings of the New York Branch this winter we have been talking about Theosophy in simple terms—about Reincarnation, Karma, Cycles—restating old truths, trying to get back to the heart of things, and so to reach the heart of others. It seems to me that, as a result, certain things have happened.

This effort at simplicity has helped us, I think, to define our terms more clearly. There is always a danger that we, who have been talking and thinking about these things for years, may talk a language that will not always be comprehensible to one who is approaching Theosophy for the first time. This effort to keep things simple has helped us to focus the force of our feeling and of our conviction, and thus to bring home that conviction itself more directly. It has helped us also to speak more definitely and more one-pointedly to the "condition", as the old books say, of those with whom we come in contact in daily life. Suppose that, entirely outside the Movement, there is someone whom we are desperately anxious to help. If we are to be all things to all men; if through us there is to come to that particular man something of the force and the power and the vision that is Theosophy, we *must* speak to him in his own terms, in terms which he will at once understand; and our desire to be able to speak in this way impels us to turn again, with the heart of a child, in all simplicity, to our Master, with the prayer that he will help us to find, in our hearts and on our lips, the words which we should say.

Finally, I think that what this effort at simplicity has done, is—to increase our faith. It has made us re-examine ourselves as to what it is that we believe, and, as a result, we find ourselves more firmly rooted and grounded than ever before, more at one than ever before with the old truths of Theosophy, so familiar and yet always new; and with this increased faith there has come, I think, a renewed consecration.

For what does it matter that life, to-day, imposes continuous strain, never-ending perplexities and anxieties? These things are all opportunities in that inner world in which we would truly live. What does matter is, that we should use these things, and not let them use us; that we should go forward with the fighting spirit, the spirit of the soldier, the basis of which is faith. Forward, with the heart of the fighting man, and, at the same time, with the faith of a child; with faith in our Great Companions, that we may do our part in the carrying out of their purposes.

Mr. LaDow: I have been thinking this afternoon that perhaps to nowhere in the world to-day, except to our Convention, could one come and find a reason for hope—because if one looks at the facts, at the state of our western civilization, one is obliged to admit that all the signs point to a continuation of disintegration and decomposition. Everything suggests that outwardly things are going to get worse before they get better. Yet, as I say, there is no reason for anyone here to receive those words in a spirit of pessimism. A previous speaker referred to the Convention as an assemblage of gods and men, and the term is striking and true. This Convention can mean little to anyone who is unable to sense behind what is said here (within the form) a tremendous spiritual, creative, positive energy. To-day, then, it is perhaps easier for us to identify ourselves in imagination at least, with that inner creative spirit which is the life of the Convention; and in so far as we identify ourselves with that, and cease to identify ourselves with the decomposing substance of the world, we must have reason for hope. In fact, we are hope itself, because hope is a phase of creation, an aspect of creative force.

There is an old saying of one of the ancient poets, Lucretius, that nothing is born into this world save by the death of some other thing. I believe that we can live with that saying, that we can discover how true it is, at every moment of the day. One application of it that can be made is in this very contrast between a dying civilization—or an apparently dying civilization—and that creative power which we feel within the Movement and which we particularly feel to-day; and to realize that that force, that creative power, can only be born into the world through the death of the powers of evil who now hold the citadel.

Mr. Saxe, after describing the procedure at meetings of the New York Branch, asked: Should we not make more use of the Questions and Answers Department in the Quarterly? It seems to me that there is an opportunity there which is not used enough. Does it not often happen that we find something in our studies which we do not really understand, and so pass it over? I think we do not realize how much more we could get if we formulated our problem as a question and sent it to the Quarterly.

The Chairman then called on members from Venezuela, not yet heard from, to address the Convention.

Mr. Alvarez-Perez: Our first wish is to give thanks for two blessings: our membership in The Theosophical Society, and our presence in this wonderful assembly.

We think that the day of the great ordeal for humanity as a whole is very near,—ordeals for the individual being almost constant. We pray that when the moment comes, a majority will make the right choice. For ourselves, may we always be granted courage and understanding,—though, if our hearts be kindled with love of our Master, we shall need no more, since all else will be added.

Mr. Rivero: "Sainte-Hélène, petite île". . . . It is said that while yet a

child, Napoleon Bonaparte, the imperial exile, wrote this single premonitory phrase on a page of his school notebook. It is also said that the Island of Saint Helena, seen from a certain point and at a certain distance, seems to trace the very features of the Napoleonic profile against the horizon.

That reminds me of William Quan Judge, "the greatest of the Exiles", in whom General Ludlow used to see the visible peak of "a submerged Continent" —possibly the Lodge itself covered by *The Ocean of Theosophy*. Like the Ark, The Theosophical Society in America rested upon that height.

I also remember, with a feeling of deep gratitude—the most pleasing of all offerings to the gods—that other lofty peak, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky; and I believe that each theosophical aspirant to the spiritual life, with love and nostalgia, with the innocence of a child and the faith of a warrior, seeing her rise like a living rock of salvation out of the shipwreck of western materialism, must have written in his own heart, in letters of light, evoking the White Yogini: "Sainte-Hélène, petite île". . . .

Dr. Cotton spoke of the past year as one of sacrifice by the Masters for us, and then suggested this train of self-questioning: To what extent have we tried to live for them? To what extent do we love and understand them better than a year ago? Have we perceived at what cost to them this wonderful opportunity was given us? Because, upon the answers to those questions will depend whether we are helpers or a burden to them.

Mr. A. Jiménez spoke of this, his first Convention, as a fire-baptism.

Senora Sánchez: The time of Convention is one of exfoliation of the soul to a new state of consciousness. Our inner lungs are enlarged by the air of the Lodge which fills them and penetrates to the smallest cells. We want to enter definitely on the path of discipleship, which means, to fulfil our individual task in The Theosophical Society, that task which the Masters are anxiously expecting of us,—because a Convention of the Society has a special message to each individual soul. All is possible to the valiant heart.

Senorita Cotton suggested that the right response to the Convention would be a vow of consecration to the service of the Lodge of Masters, and that, kindled by the *Fragments* of Cavé, our personalities, our pusillanimity, and even our sins, should be cast into oblivion by the ever-present thought of our own Master, which would inevitably lift us to him.

The Convention next listened with great interest and pleasure to Mr. Brush and Mr. Fisher; as also to Mr. Miller, Jr., Mr. Mitchell, Jr., Mr. H. Mitchell, Mr. Russ, Jr.

The Chairman then asked Mr. Hargrove to speak again.

Mr. Hargrove: I am anxious that there shall be no misunderstanding on the subject of indrawal. I spoke of the time, almost certainly coming, when there would be further pruning to do, when outer activities in more senses than one would have to be cut down to the root. That is not a negative process. It is a positive process. What it really means is discipleship. In other words, if

we would form part of the root and continue to form part of the root, we must of necessity become disciples, or rather, I should say, recognize the kind of disciples we already are—because discipleship is a very comprehensive term. If a man is so immersed in business that he gives his whole heart and soul to it, all his attention, all his interest, then he is a disciple of, I do not know what to call it—a friend of mine calls it the Golden Calf, which I suppose is as good a term as any. All of us are disciples of something, of some idea. We may be a disciple of an elemental such as the Golden Calf, or we may be a disciple of "learning" and no more—which is a perfectly respectable form of discipleship, although some of us are prepared to make a guess as to where it would lead us. At any rate, we have to determine the nature of our discipleship.

Members of The Theosophical Society are almost alone in the world in knowing that real discipleship, that is to say, a desire to become a disciple of the Lodge—is an immediate possibility. The Theosophical Society is the outermost door leading toward that possibility; but discipleship is not a matter of taking degrees or of signing documents. Discipleship is an attitude of the heart, a spirit, a persistent purpose, a life. If you will turn to the later pages in Volume I of *Letters That Have Helped Me*, you will find much said there in regard to the way in which any individual can constitute himself a disciple. If you will turn to some of the later *Fragments* in Volume I, you will find a great deal said on the same subject. Therefore, no one is left in the dark as to how to begin. And of one thing you may be certain, that when you are ready, your Master will meet you more than half way. It was he who started you on that path; it is his life in you that has carried you forward; it is he who awaits with eagerness the moment when he can wisely reveal himself to you.

For ever and everywhere, Masters are looking for disciples, for those who will help them in their work. There is no thought of exclusion, far from it; but we *must* make ourselves ready, and we *must* begin where we are,—not at the top. A proper understanding of the hierarchical principle in nature will make it easier to realize that there are *steps* in the right direction; that it would be a mistake to suppose we have reached the stage when nothing short of a Mahatma is really fit to teach us about the inner life. We have opportunities to learn from all kinds of sources. We are surrounded by books of instruction. There are plenty of members of The Theosophical Society who probably know more than we do from their years of membership or study; know something about the conditions that lead to self-knowledge, to self-understanding, to ultimate union with the Higher Self.

But the fact remains that wherever we begin, whatever stage we have attained, that door is wide open for all who would enter,—for *all* who would enter if they are willing to pay the price. And that price has been intimated already. They must leave self behind. They must fight self daily and during every hour of every day. They must fight depression, and self-assertion; timidity, and arrogance. They must try to live in the Eternal,—to live for the things that do not change with time, to live to please their Master, not to please themselves. Every one of us contains that supreme possibility. It is latent, but it is there

potentially. We can ask for all that life contains. Everything in nature is open to us, and, once more, we know (we have been told it so often at all periods in the history of The Theosophical Society) that the Masters are ready and waiting and longing. The question is whether *we* are ready and waiting and longing. Because until we long with everything in us, body and mind and soul, we cannot hope to reach them. They will not accept a half-hearted or a grudging or a bargaining spirit. With them, as with life itself, it is all or nothing. Therefore it is a question of bringing oneself to the point where one can look them in the eyes and say: It *is* all—without reserve—unqualifiedly—now and for ever. That is their spirit; that is the spirit to which they respond, the spirit that calls forth from them the infinity of their helpfulness, of their wisdom and love and power. And while no member of the Society is under the slightest obligation to do more than listen, we know there are those for whom such ideals are living hopes, vital incentives, of the deepest import and concern. It is only right, therefore, before this Convention closes, to speak once more of the glad tidings which Theosophy brings: that the waters of life are still offered freely, without money and without price, to all those who love not their lives unto the death, and who see in Masters the beginning and the end of their hearts' desire.

The thanks of the Convention having been voted to its officers, to the editors and contributors of the QUARTERLY, and to the New York Branch for its hospitality, the Convention adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.
JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

ARVIKA, SWEDEN.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, we send our brotherly and sincere greetings!

At this great yearly feast, our hearts meet in prayer that the Masters' work may be accomplished in us all.

"So long as God's will is our law, we are but a sort of noble slaves. When His will is our will we are free children".

On behalf of the Members of the Arvika Branch,

ANNA FJAESTAD,
President.

AYLSHAM, ENGLAND.

To the Secretary, Theosophical Society: . . . . Understanding of the meaning of Theosophy was never more needed in the world than it is to-day. We live in dark and troubled times, and there seems no light ahead. Without Theosophy we could not carry on; with it, we learn to take long views, and to have patience. I hope that by increasing faith and fidelity, our small Branch may be of some little use, amid the chaos and difficulty of the present days. We send our friendly greetings and best wishes for the Convention.

ALICE GRAVES,
Secretary, Norfolk Branch.

Mrs. Bagnell of the Norfolk Branch wrote: Convention draws very near and I wish to send you, and all members of the T.S. who will assemble for it, my most earnest and sincere good wishes. Looking back over the years it seems almost amazing that year after year it is possible to hold the Convention, and so not only give to all T.S. members fresh life and inspiration for the coming year, but to keep alive in the world a high ideal, a steadfast faith that can be found nowhere else. We know that this would not be possible if it were not for the Masters who stand behind us, upbuilding the T.S. which is their creation, and lending us constantly their strength and light. . . .

In this distracted world, that at times seems to be disintegrating under our eyes, there is great need for a steady force that is dedicated to the highest service, that strives to embody the idea of the True, the Beautiful, the Good, and it is because I firmly believe that the T.S. is such a force, that to me it seems the most important thing in the world to-day. . . .

Miss Bagnell also wrote: I wanted to send this line to take you my heartfelt wishes for Convention. At this time of chaos in international affairs, when compromise with the enemy seems the order of the day (instead of a vigorous policy of resistance) one looks to the leadership given at Convention for the true line of policy, in regard to the guidance of nations and the government of the world. Yet, so much deeper than the outer turmoil, are the strong, resistless currents of force flowing from their source in the Lodge; and it is our hope to co-operate to the utmost with the power so generously poured out, to cleanse and purify our thinking (in every branch of study, devotion, philosophy, science) and then to enkindle our will with renewed ardour. . . .

DENVER, COLORADO.

The Virya Branch sends most cordial greetings to the Convention, and very earnest wishes for a true realization of its vital place among all members, and a deep appreciation of the generous provision made for the training and instruction of our members through all channels.

ANNE EVANS, *President.*
MARY KENT WALLACE, *Secretary.*

OSLO, NORWAY.

To the Secretary, Theosophical Society: . . . In one of the New York Branch Reports, Mr. Hargrove spoke of all the great Avatars as surely co-operating; and certainly we must think of them as all working together for what is contained in the words, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done". Now that a forerunner, and later a Messenger from the Lodge, may be approaching, I wonder if the hour is also drawing near when "the elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other, shall be gathered together", and mankind learn what lies behind this co-operation of all the great Avatars. "What is to be, already is." Surely this co-operation which is and always has been a fact in the spiritual world, will become also a fact in the outer world; and if ages may still pass before mankind as a whole will realize the fact of "all souls being one in the Oversoul", yet there may be cycles in which those who have fought and struggled faithfully with hope against hope, never losing their faith in spite of all odds, those who have died as well as those who are now living, may rejoice in living a life when "the earth shall be a heaven in comparison with what it is now"—or perhaps ever has been.

All our members wish to send their most heartfelt greetings, with thanks for all loving care, and praying that we may all know what is really the Masters' blessing.

HENNING DAHL,
Chairman, Oslo Branch.

SOUTH SHIELDS, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society assembled in Convention: The Members of the

South Shields Branch have requested me to convey to you their very sincere fraternal greetings. We feel we must at this period offer a tribute of gratitude, and do homage to, the Founders of the Society, and those who have gone before and are still working with the Cause behind the Veil. They have given us an ideal to strive for by living a life in harmony with the divine life at the core of Nature; an ideal at once grand and glorious. It is a privilege and honour to have the opportunity presented to us of working with the Lodge force for the benefit of humanity: it makes our lives purposeful, and also responsible, which is as it should be. We are with you in aim and purpose and hope that the divine energy that is poured out at the meeting by the invisible helpers who are assisting us individually and collectively, will be carried round the world like a torch, and fire the hearts of many who are in darkness and longing for the Light. The ethics taught by Theosophy is the only true solution of the world's problems to-day, and if we remain loyal and steadfast to the trust the Masters have placed in us, Theosophy, in time, will come from within to the surface, like a fragrant breeze in the early morning, heralding the sun and the opening day.

THOMAS MACKEY,
President.

TORONTO, CANADA.

The Toronto Branch T.S. desires to send fraternal Greetings to the members of The Theosophical Society in Convention assembled and to all others throughout the world.

While it is true that much lawlessness and turbulence is visible in the world to-day, daily experience leads to the belief that many are seeking a better understanding of life.

The failure of present modes of thought and ways of living to bring the peace and security which are always desired, is leading many to inquire for a better solution of the problem.

Perhaps some of us have thought how fortunate were those whose privilege it was to be working for the Movement in the early days when H.P.B. and others were present in person. This had its advantages certainly, but may we not believe it to be an even greater privilege to be able to help when the earlier attractions are gone, when the Movement is passing through a stage when there is so great a need for labourers to tend the growing fields so that the harvest be assured?

Faith in the Theosophical Movement and in its power to help the souls of men is a need to-day. All of us can help by allowing that power to work in our own souls, and perhaps that is the most effective way.

ALBERT J. HARRIS,
Secretary.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send sincere fraternal greetings. As members of the Society we have each in accordance with the law, gravitated towards, and finally been drawn into the movement, just as a mountain stream starts as rain drops, and gravitates towards a river. To-day we are very glad to be with you in thought and purpose, as part of a movement which may be likened to the mountain stream, because as the years pass by we realize more fully the great wisdom of the founders, and the necessity of forming such a nucleus from which the spirit of Universal Brotherhood may flow. It becomes abundantly clear that this movement, founded upon fundamental truths gathered through the ages with infinite patience and care, presents the solution of man's search for a formula which will provide ultimate peace, and enable him to rejoice and go upon his way. Our Society has been formed as a channel through which these truths may flow, and each individual member as part of this forward movement can do much to help in its growth. Further we can move as a whole, with courage and conviction born of the knowledge that the ideal to which we strive is something greater than its component parts, as it possesses not only movement, but the power of infinite growth. The gathering of

the members in Convention to-day is a symbol of the nucleus, and upon its power of movement and growth depends the welfare and spiritual progress of generations to come.

FREDK. A. ROSS,
President.

ONEAL, ARKANSAS.

To the Officers and Members of The Theosophical Society, in Convention Assembled: Most sincere greetings.

I wish to join with you in a salute to the Corps,—those beings of grandeur in whose light and love we seek refuge from the turmoil of the world, and to whose Cause we seek to consecrate our lives.

It is a very great privilege and joy to be here—even in thought and in spirit—among comrades whose presence we cherish, and whose devotion we trust. Perhaps some of us are looking forward to the arrival of a new Messenger? Might it not be better for us, could we appreciate those we already have? Were it not for the self-sacrifice, and loyal devotion to the Cause of some—now in this room—methinks there would be no T.S. Convention here to-day! Lord, grant that we may *be* grateful; that we may respond; that we may be true to our trust; that we may rise to the vast opportunity we face, and to the responsibilities we face.

My deepest thanks are due to the QUARTERLY,—and to those who make its continued existence possible. Also, for the Reports of N. Y. Branch meetings;—these *are* valuable, and I greatly appreciate them.

WM. E. MULLINAX.

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

To the Convention of the T.S. 1935: Dear Comrades, Please accept from us our kindest greetings and most sincere wishes for the present Convention.

We deeply feel our inability to be present at the Convention personally, not to be able to pass at least a day in your midst and in an atmosphere of heaven, and perhaps thereby become better, stronger and humbler servants of the Great Cause.

All we can do is to try to unite our hearts to yours during the hours of the Convention; to pray to the Holy Ones that our hearts may become humble and strong to endure to the very end, that our aspirations may be cleansed and quickened that the force distilled therefrom may serve the Masters to accomplish Their work for Humanity, and that our insight may become true and clear and undimmed to pierce the clouds of darkness and blindness which now, more than ever, are threatening to engulf the world; and, above all, that we may all be enabled to feel the love of the Masters, and to give ourselves heart and soul to that love in a great and overwhelming passion where self shall become annihilated for ever.

LEO SCHOCH.
ELISABETH SCHOCH.

TRIESTE, ITALY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Dear Comrades,

To you, who have the rare privilege to meet again in Their name, we send our good wishes and fraternal greetings. We are in spirit with you, and in spite of the great material distance, we feel closely linked together in these Easter-Days of the Soul.

We wish to thank those who made it possible for us to receive the "Quarterlys" and the "Reports", which are our spiritual bread during the year.

ALBERTO PLINIO.
LOTTY PLINIO.

Delegates and members showed intense interest in the reading of Letters of Greeting, which included, in addition to the foregoing, letters from Mr. Arthur W. Barrett (Massachusetts); Mrs. G. A. L. Dionne (Connecticut); Mr. S. A. Drummond (Oklahoma); Mr. Birger Elwing (Texas); Mr. Herman Hohnstedt and Miss Hohnstedt, as President and Secretary of the Cincinnati Branch; Mr. Harry Knoff (Norway); Mr. W. G. Roberts, President of the Middletown Branch; Mr. A. Valedón (Venezuela); Mr. P. W. Ward, President of the Gateshead Branch (England); telegram from Miss Evans and Miss Wallace, as President and Secretary of the Branch in Denver; telegram from Captain and Mrs. Hamlen (Augusta, Maine); telegram from Mrs. Robert L. Redfield (Connecticut); telegram from Mrs. L. Vaile (North Carolina); cablegram from Mrs. Graves, Mrs. Bagnell, Miss Bagnell (England), and cablegram from Mrs. Raymond (Japan). Several other letters from abroad were read, which, like all other letters, were received with applause, but are not acknowledged or quoted in the open pages of the QUARTERLY for the reason that unusual political conditions in some parts of Europe would make this inconsiderate and inexpedient (see the QUARTERLY, July, 1934; page 33).

The Universe is, in fact, full of magnificent promise for us, if we will but lift our eyes and see. It is that lifting of the eyes which is the first need and the first difficulty; we are so apt readily to be content with what we see within touch of our hands. It is the essential characteristic of the man of genius that he is comparatively indifferent to that fruit which is just within touch, and hungers for that which is afar on the hills. In fact he does not need the sense of contact to arouse longing. He knows that this distant fruit, which he perceives without the aid of the physical senses, is a subtler and a stronger food than any which appeals to them.

—THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD.

REVIEWS

Convictions and Controversies, by Ralph Adams Cram; Marshall Jones Company, Boston, 1935; price, $2.50.

In this age, when one has the impression, most of the time, of wandering through a lunatic asylum where the inmates are all standing on their heads, it is a profound pleasure to find a book like this. Mr. Cram, the well-known architect, has published a collection of his articles and lectures. He says in his preface that, although these writings were produced separately, they are related essentially by unity of thought. There is in them a certain amount of repetition of ideas, but, far from being tedious, it serves to impress them more forcibly upon the reader, like a recurring motif in a musical composition.

These ideas, the basic subject of the book, are: the decline and approaching end of our civilization, the cycles of civilization, and the standards and principles by which a real culture is built and judged.

Whether he has worked them out independently or not, his conclusions accord with those set forth by Sir Flinders Petrie. There would seem to be "tides in the affairs of men", great waves of culture which rise to their apex and decline in periods of approximately five hundred years. Mr. Cram, who treats here only of the Western World, makes these cycles begin with the Third Dynasty in Egypt about the year 3,000 B.C. It was then, according to him, that one of the world's greatest architects, Imhotep, suddenly appeared. Either he came up from the mass level of Neolithic life, or the elements of civilization were brought over to Egypt by survivors of the lost Atlantis. Mr. Cram admits the Atlantean tradition, but seems to think that it survived in very few places, and that, between it and the beginnings of a new period of civilization, a "pralaya" or dark age of immense duration had intervened. These five hundred year cycles are easily traced from 3,000 B.C. to our own day, when we would seem to have ended such a period and to be plunging into the darkness that follows and precedes a culture. This theory of cycles is pre-eminently theosophical.

Mr. Cram attacks violently the nineteenth century doctrine of "progressive evolution", the optimistic and sentimental notion that every day in every way we inevitably get better and better. He points out what should be obvious to every student of history—but, alas, is not—that the ideals and artistic productions of the year 3,000 B.C. are just as good as those of the year 1400 A.D. and infinitely better than those of the year 1935. If humanity, as a whole, advances,

it is by almost invisible stages. Indeed, he does not think that the mass of men has advanced in the slightest, but that it is still in the Neolithic state, and he speaks of it as the *Neolithic Mass*. This mass, he states, is not human at all. This suggests the statements of *The Secret Doctrine* that the animal man does not become a real human *Man* until he becomes a Master. According to Mr. Cram, from the Neolithic Mass arise great beings of genius who do behave like humans, and by them the achievements of the race are judged. In our time, this Neolithic Mass is in control. Its representatives sit in our parliaments and rule the nations.

Now that we have reached the extreme point of our cycle, when all standards of taste in morals, conduct and the arts are disappearing, when the political situation is desperate and the economic crisis most acute, what shall we do? What can we do? There is a passage often quoted from *Through the Gates of Gold* concerning the civilizations which rise to their crest and decline because man refuses to go on to a higher cycle. Will our civilization refuse to go on? Will it too fall back into dissolution? However, it is in the dark ages that the new culture is born. When the empty forms of the old age are broken up on the compost heap, the seeds of new life are there germinating. While the Roman Empire decayed, the splendour of the Middle Ages was slowly growing. Those who possess the treasures of the heritage of spiritual wisdom can hold them in their hearts and lives as in an ark, and can hand them on, perhaps in secret, to those who are worthy to bear them forward into the new day.

Mr. Cram, as an architect, dwells primarily upon the saving grace of Beauty, and in his essay, *Ordeal by Beauty*, he suggests that one way of judging and appraising our productions in all fields is by subjecting them to the question: Are they beautiful? He says:

> Bring up to the bar of the Courts of Beauty any one of the things that offend us to-day, no matter what this may be, and abide by the verdict rendered. For the sake of impersonality let it be a modern city, anything from Somerville to Chicago, and what has beauty to say in the premises? Before its austere regard—for beauty is no tolerant sybarite—the bold pleading of business efficiency, of plausible economic law, of material progress, of a mechanistic philosophy of evolution—of modernism in a word, falls thin and unconvincing. . . . Is it unreasonable to urge that by the use of beauty as a standard of values and as a revelation of ideals, we may perhaps the more easily accomplish the rejection and abandonment of much that we now, in our heart of hearts, know to be unworthy, and that through the wise application of the same agency we might succeed in establishing a more workable method of controlling the vagrant will of man?

Mr. Cram is too much of an artist to consider beauty as separate from the good and the true. He makes this clear:

> The possession of beauty and the function of art are intimately and absolutely an integral part of life itself, and are neither attainable nor usable—nor even desirable—unless they are so related. . . . What was the greatest synthesis of beauty made operative through art, that man has ever achieved? The answer is very simple, it was a Gothic cathedral of the thirteenth century during a Pontifical High Mass, and somewhere about the middle of the fourteenth century in England, or the fifteenth century in France or Spain. Every art raised to its highest point was here brought into play in

one place and associated in absolute union with the greatest beauty of thought, emotion and action that have ever been the possession of fallen man. Painting, sculpture, and a score of exquisite minor arts, as those of glass, needlework and enamel, with the crafts of the goldsmith, the woodcarver and the bell-founder, were here co-ordinated through the supreme power of the master-art of architecture in a unity that was almost divine in its perfection. To this unity entered other arts that they might breathe into it the breath of life: music first of all, and poetry and the drama through the sublime liturgies and ceremonial that had grown up through a thousand years of striving and aspiration and the revelation that is their boon and reward. And all were for the exposition and realization of the supreme beauty of spiritual things: the durable love of God for His children through the Sacrifice of Calvary, eternally renewed upon the altar, and the veritable presence of His Spirit through the miracle of the Mass.

ST.C. LAD.

Felicities of Thomas Traherne, chosen and edited with Introduction by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch; P. J. & A. E. Dobell, London, 1934; price, 3*s*.

Most of us have long been familiar with *Centuries of Meditations*, that book of deep devotion and great beauty which has, by some, been favourably compared with the *Imitation*. Now, in *Felicities*, we have a kind of anthology of Thomas Traherne's writings—fragments of his prose, side by side with some of his shorter poems; a small book, not so much to read straight through, perhaps, as to dip into when one is quite alone. Thomas Traherne is said to have been a very retiring and modest man, and his life was both brief and obscure, but like many lovers of solitude (who are also so often lovers of nature), he had a certain gift of inner vision; he recognized with a kind of shy passion peculiarly his, that behind all things lay a marvellous and mysterious unity. His were "the rapturous aspirings of a joyful and happy soul, conscious of its kinship with God Himself, and sure of its divinity and of its glorious destiny". Traherne was a poet in the truest sense of the word, not because he wrote charming verses in his youth (for, as a matter of fact, his prose far outstrips his poetry in true value), but because, whatever he saw or felt was illumined by the light of the spiritual world. As a child particularly, the most ordinary objects upon which his eyes fell had a kind of mystical significance—they were always seen as part of the Whole. Writing of his earliest impressions he says: "The corn was Orient and Immortal Wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The Dust and Stones of the Street were as precious GOLD: the Gates were at first the End of the World. The Green Trees when I saw them first through one of the Gates Transported and Ravished me, their sweetness and unusual Beauty made my Heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasie, they were such strange and Wonderful Things. . . . Eternity was Manifest in the light of the Day, and something infinite Behind everything appeared: which talked with my Expectation and moved my Desire. . . . The Skies were mine, and so were the Sun and Moon and Stars, and all the World was mine". There is a lilting beauty in Traherne's utterances which is characteristic of almost all he says. Thus in the *Centuries* we read: "Your enjoyment of the world is never right till every morning you awake in Heaven; see yourself

in your Father's Palace; and look upon the skies, the earth and the air, as Celestial Joys: having such a revered esteem of all, as if you were among the Angels." How like this in thought are the two lines in an early descriptive poem of his:

"And evry Stone, and Evry Star a Tongue,
And evry Gale of Wind a Curious Song."

His was a living and a burning faith in the goodness of God the Father; he moved in eternity and so in celestial realms. In the introduction to this small book, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch says: "Traherne died young: but the gods at his Christening must have loved him, to have endowed him with his angelic way of saying things." We are much indebted to the editor of this delightful little book for its carefully chosen selections, and the general arrangement of them.

T.D.

Modern Trends in World-Religions, the Haskell Lectures in Comparative Religion, edited by A. Eustace Haydon; the University of Chicago Press, 1934; price, $2.50.

Professor Haydon explains that "when the Haskell Foundation was established forty years ago the hope of the founder was that a sympathetic interpretation of religions would yield a spirit of good-will and mutual understanding between peoples of the East and West". Good-will and understanding are rare and precious qualities in this sublunar world, for they are attributes of a highly evolved state of human consciousness which few individuals have attained. It is extremely doubtful whether wisdom has increased in the mass during the past half-century. Certainly there has been an almost universal subsidence of religious intolerance; but these lectures reveal only too clearly the nature of the tolerance which now prevails. It is based, not upon good-will and understanding, but upon scepticism and indifference. The lecturers are simply not interested in any speculations concerning the eternal truths or the divine revelations which may be embodied in any religious tradition. Six of these traditions are examined in this volume—Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism—each by a "specialist"; and the general conclusion seems to be that they are old-fashioned "patterns of thought and custom" which must be transformed beyond all recognition if they are to survive. An exception must be made for Professor Pratt's admirable résumé of Buddhist thought, and there are occasional flashes of intuition even among those who speak on behalf of Christianity. However, the net impression remains, that these specialists have the same measure of good-will and understanding towards the object of their study which they might experience in the presence of a stuffed dodo in a museum.

Their active concerns are elsewhere, and within the sphere of these interests they can become as dogmatic and as intolerant as their ancestors. All of them speak of modern science with awe, and some of them seem to be obsessed by the Marxian myth of "social-economic progress". This is especially true of the Protestant apologists who seek to remould Christianity nearer to their hearts'

desire. The mission of Christianity, in their opinion, is to change the order of society, to re-distribute wealth in such a way that everyone will be able without strain to satisfy all his material wants. They are so immersed in this problem that they have not enough mental energy left to understand how and why traditional religious teaching primarily offers comfort and sustenance not to the body but to the soul.

The presence of ten just men in Sodom would have saved the Cities of the Plain from fire and brimstone. Surely it is credible that each of the world-religions still contains a living nucleus of faith in the supremacy of spiritual values. The word "religion" includes a multitude of connotations. The religion of the sage or the mystic is not the same in form as the religion of the peasant or the savage. Nevertheless, religious consciousness of every kind, the lowest as well as the highest, is marked by some recognition, clear or dim, of the fact that the material world to which our bodies belong is less real than the invisible world which is the source of all creative powers, including those of our own souls. Every religious genius has toiled without intermission to combat the shallow materialism to which so many of the clergy are to-day reverting. "The darkness of ignorance", said Patanjali, "is: holding that which is unenduring, impure, full of pain, not the Soul, to be eternal, pure, full of joy, the Soul."

S.V.

I Speak for the Silent (*Prisoners of the Soviets*), by Professor V. V. Tchernavin; Hale, Cushman and Flint, Boston, 1935; price, $2.50.

If any reader of the QUARTERLY has acquaintances who do not realize the diabolic cruelty of Soviet rule—who think that "after all there is something to be said for Communism", that "things are no worse in Russia to-day than they were under the Czar"—we recommend, as an act of charity, the purchase and gift or loan of this book. It is a record, by an honest man, of his own experience. We have never hesitated to say that Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and the rest of the brood, dead or alive, are devils, and that Sovietism itself is the nearest known approach to hell on earth. Every additional demonstration of these facts is welcome. The pity of it is that so few people are sufficiently intelligent to see, beneath the surface of such horrors, the proof that all class hatred, such as that encouraged by the American Federation of Labor, all demagogy, all robbing of the few for the alleged benefit of the many,—lead directly to the same abyss.

H.

The Civilization of the East: China, by René Grousset, translated by Catherine Alison Phillips; Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1934; price, $7.50.

Readers of the earlier book, *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*, know that M. Grousset, in addition to great knowledge of his subject, possesses to a considerable extent the faculty of looking within it. He obviously realizes that a great art lifts a veil and discloses the heart of the people who produced it. In this discussion of Chinese art, there lies the secret of that enigmatic

reserve and aloofness with which the East (China particularly) so often baffles the West. The nation is shown to be, from prehistoric times, impregnated with the sense of mystery, conscious of a Presence "divined rather than visible . . . something immanent which refuses to clothe itself in concrete form". This fundamental quality in Chinese thought, the author endeavours to make clearer by comparison with the art of other lands:

> Is it that of Greece? The Zeus of Mylasa, the Aphrodite of Cnidus or of Melos, are but flesh made marble. Or Egypt, with its colossi of the Pharaonic ages imposing the precision of their lines upon us commandingly in the brilliant sunlight? Or India, with the Buddha of Sarnath, the three headed Siva of Elephanta, the Manjusri of Ajanta, or the tender imaginings of Borobudur? In all of these we have humanity deified and magnified till it reaches the very bounds of the cosmos, but, in spite of all, remaining human. In China, on the contrary, we have an intentionally indeterminate quality making itself felt, . . . only in order to conceal itself the more surely. . . . We have here an ideal of art consisting in mystery expressed in a form that is not concrete, of mystery in its entirety, dreaded or loved for its own sake, . . . an art which succeeds in suggesting and propounding in an abstract form the whole problem of destiny.

The early art—bronzes, jades or sculptures—is shown to be "eloquent of the dread power of those visions of terror, whether beasts, monsters or gods, which haunted the Chinese imagination . . . not so much real creatures as embodied menace and power." As the ages passed there came a gradual evolution:

> Instead of the mask of terror in which the primitive bronzists thought they saw the riddle for an instant face to face, we now see how, after ages of Taoist ecstacies and Mahayanist tenderness, the T'ang poets and their counterparts in painting, the Sung artists, discerned the soul of the cosmos in the lines of a landscape bathed in mist and lost in infinite distances, which make it as poignant as a human countenance. . . . The mystery of terror has become a metaphysical mystery. Terror before the unknowable All has become transmuted in the course of the centuries into a passionate striving for communion with it. The Chinese æsthetic ideal, having exhausted all the possibilities of realism during six or eight centuries . . . was reverting to the most ancient element in its history: that is, to a conception of nature as animated by an immanent force.

The discussion of T'ang and Sung poetry—prose translations coupled with photographs of the T'ang, Sung and Ming landscapes which each inspired—is one of the most delightful portions of the book. While the avowed aim of the volume is to serve as an introduction to Asiatic art, it possesses an additional appeal for students of Theosophy, because of its suggestive glimpses of the inner development of a people (the real source of all artistic expression)—culminating in that serene atmosphere which the Chinese sages attained, and of which the poets wrote: "I looked upon the flowers, as motionless as ourselves. I listened to the birds hovering in space; and I understood the great truth." "My soul has soared beyond what is visible, at once wanderer and captive, in a wondrous ravishment."

J.C.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 395.—*In an issue of the* QUARTERLY *of several months ago, we were told of a "great man" who lived between 1760 and 1844, and who, being slanderously attacked, was presented with a memorial, as an outraged protest from twenty-eight men in a small town. Would not this loyal protest, given voluntarily (in contrast to what H.P.B. received), mark them in future lives as belonging to him?*

ANSWER.—There are so many unknown factors regarding the relationship between the twenty-eight men who protested against the slanderous attack upon a "great man" that it would seem to be idle speculation to try to imagine what their connection in a future life might be. As one of the hall-marks of a member of the Lodge is said to be gratitude for a service rendered, it may be taken for granted that these men would be rewarded in some way by the "Good Law", but whether they "belonged" to any particular member of the Lodge, is a matter which would involve a much closer and more intimate relationship than that which prompted an act of common decency by neighbours. G.H.M.

ANSWER.—The meaning of the question is not clear, for such a phrase as that used—"mark them in future lives as belonging to him"—has, or should have, a very profound significance, and it might or might not apply to the case in question. Defence of someone wronged would not of necessity establish so close a Karmic bond as this phrase implies, for an ardent condemnation of slander or injustice is the obvious moral duty of any and every one of us, and some kind of Karma would probably be involved. The "loyal protest" might be the unconscious repayment of a past debt, or it might be merely in obedience to our own individual standard of right action, thus creating good Karma for the future. But "to belong" to anyone, in the true sense, suggests hierarchical affinities—a very deep and far-reaching matter indeed. For instance, the chêla of one Master might defend the chêla of another Master if slanderously attacked, but this would not mean that, because he had been loyal on general principles, he would therefore be transferred from his own Ray and from the Master to whom he really did "belong", to the Ray of that other chêla, and to the keeping of that chêla's Master. T.A.

ANSWER.—This question opens a big subject and one of considerable conjecture. We know how we are drawn to individuals whom we admire, and whose knowledge and judgment we respect. We know, too, how we seek them out and arrange to meet with them as often as possible; how we try to follow their advice, and how we instinctively rise to their defence whenever they are unjustly criticized or attacked. What is true of our affiliations, desires and actions in a given incarnation, may be equally true over a longer period embracing many incarnations. Quite naturally, then, we may reincarnate in groups, drawn together because of mutual interest and purpose, and thus be privileged to gather around, and to serve under, the same leader or leaders who already have won our confidence, and who have been an inspiration to us in life after life. It seems probable, then, that the twenty-eight men mentioned in the question may have rallied around the "great man" many times before, and will have the privilege of doing so many times again. Carrying the conjecture farther, it seems reasonable

that their vigorous and positive act on his behalf *that time*, may merit the opportunity for a closer affiliation with him thereafter. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—It might well give to each of them the opportunity, in a future life, to come into contact with him again, perhaps to serve him. But the extent of this initial opportunity would depend, in each case, upon the motive of the signer of the original protest, upon its character and the extent to which it was unselfish. One may have signed because the others did, and because he wanted to follow along. Another, because it was a pity to have a fuss, it upset things so, and the protest would make everything comfortable again. But the man who signed because he was ablaze with anger and indignation at injustice; because he wanted to nail a lie; because he believed with all his heart and soul in this "great man", and wanted to go on record that he did, and to support him;—that man might well "belong" in a future life. C.R.A.

QUESTION NO. 396.—*How may one best begin to serve the purposes of the T.S., when the pressure of temporal needs is great?*

ANSWER.—In the lives of many people to-day, the pressure of temporal needs is great indeed, so that it seems and may well seem, as if there were not a moment in which to do anything for the T.S. Let us all thank heaven that that is no barrier to work for the T.S. Right action in the face of temporal needs clearly is a duty—and a duty, *every* duty, is an expression of the divine will for us. If, when we want to look at the morning paper, it be our duty instead to write a letter, that duty is the will of the divine for us, at that moment,—the will of our highest Self; and obedience to that will, instead of following the inclination of the personal self, is a direct contribution to the T.S. and to the Theosophical Movement. If there be sacrifice involved, then the greater the sacrifice, the greater the service. We can make our contribution doubly effective if we choose mentally to direct it, or aim it, at any particular purpose. The desire that it *be* a contribution, is an extra gift in itself. The great pattern was laid down for us in the "Way of the Cross", to use Christian terms for the moment; the personal self must be crucified if the immortal Self is to emerge. There can be no resurrection in spiritual consciousness, until the personal self is on the way to becoming dead,—until the demon of self-assertion and self-will and self-love has been dealt with and conquered. The Way of the Cross: there is no escape from it, and the whole world is trying to escape from it. To most so-called Christians, all that is left of the Cross to-day is a way, they imagine, to evade the consequences of their sins. True Christianity teaches no such thing. Christ, like all great Avatars, came into the world to point the way to victory, to point out how we could become men, instead of the distorted images that we are. Do not let temporal needs hold us back. Let us thank heaven for our temporal needs: they are stepping stones toward our own immortality. Z.

ANSWER.—Materialism dies hard! "It is not what is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done, that counts." We can serve the purposes of the T.S. by following the Noble Eightfold Path of Gautama Buddha: 1. Right views. 2. High aims (or Right aspirations). 3. Right speech. 4. Upright conduct. 5. Right livelihood. 6. Right effort (also translated as Perseverance in well-doing). 7. Right mindfulness (or Right recollection). 8. Right contemplation. We can also serve the purposes of the T.S. by trying to do all that we have to do—the most ordinary duties of life—with the desire to please the Master whom we believe to be *our* Master,—by doing ordinary things as we imagine he would like them done, gladly, quickly, well. Incidentally, most people would never think of the spiritual world or of spiritual purposes if it were *not* for "the pressure of temporal needs". Instead of regarding such pressure as an obstacle, we should humbly admit that we evidently need it just to be kept going. X.